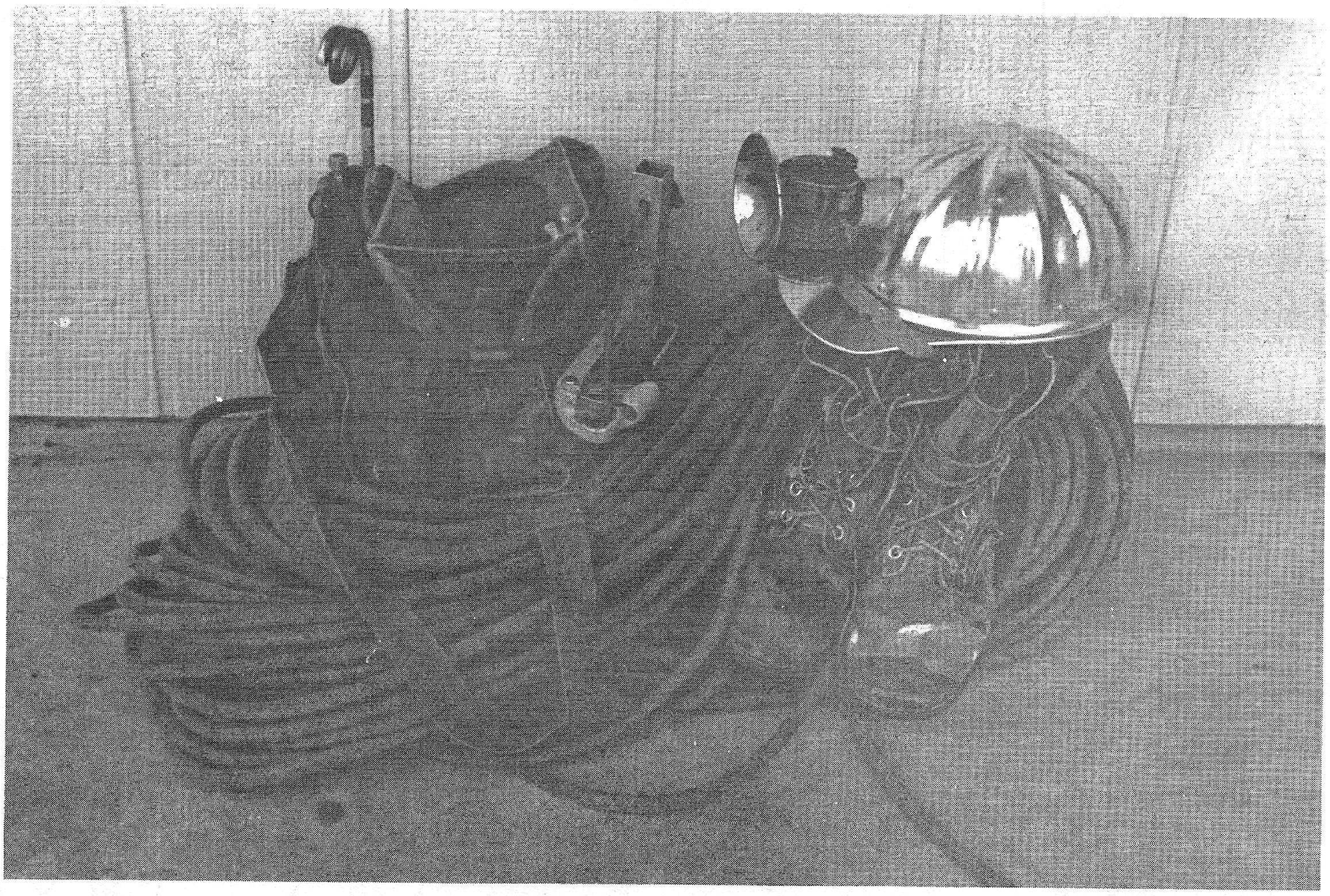
SWTSG

newsletter '71-'72

J.Jones



LIFE - Causalty
INSURANCE
CAVE SHAFT CO. INC
GOLONDRINAS
J. Jones

TO THE UNKNOWN

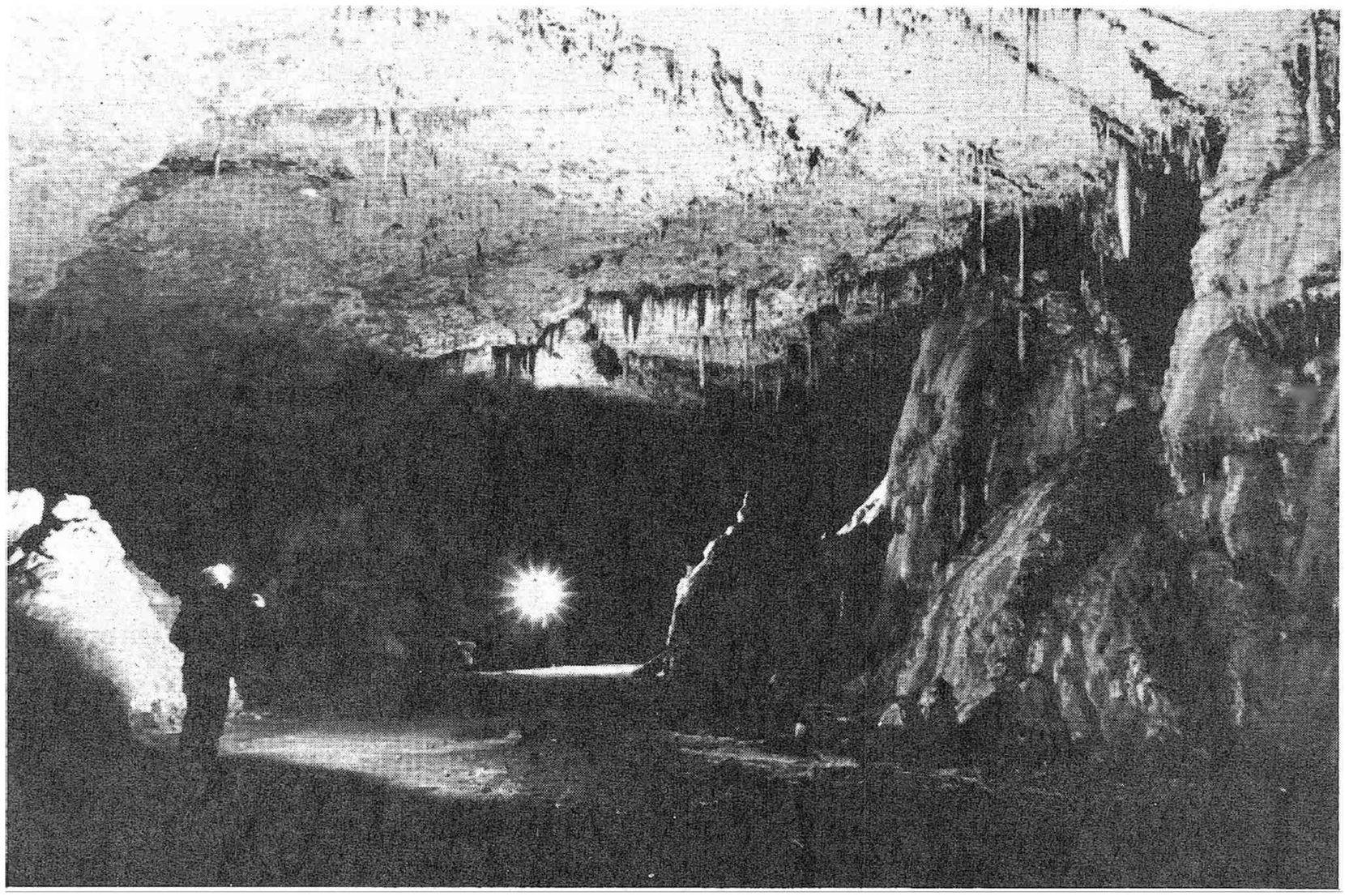
Through passages small and crawlways tight,
we've journeyed forth bringing with us light.
Through the depths unknown we've traveled down,
descending further and further beneath the ground

Through passages dark and unexplored,
we sought the secrets hidden behind closed doors®

Through the winding corridors following winding lives,
we've gone through spaces of endless time;
where the darkness reigns over all that is there,
and only the water can accept its dare.
It drips, it falls, it changes to stone,
creating mysterious new realms in the vast unknown.

Through the waters dark and strange to eyes,
we've waded and swam, so as not to be denied
the thrill of going where no one's ever been,
and seeing things that have never been known to men.

Dale Pate
October 22, 1971



Hidden Cave, N. M.

Newsletter '71-'72

The SOUTHWEST TEXAS STUDENT GROTTO NEWSLETTER is published once a year. Our exchange policy is to exchange with those who send to us. The official Grotto address is: SWTSG, Student Union, San Marcos, Texas 78666.

Staff

Editor / Robert Hemperly
Typist / Mary Kay Krauska
Photographer / Keith Heuss
Printer / Ronnie Fieseler

A Letter of Explanation. . . .

The SWTSG did not publish a newsletter for 1971 because the Research Chairman, Mike Walsh, was up to his hard hat in material trying to edit MEXICAN CAVING. The time, energies, and the bank account of the grotto were all extended to their fullest measure to attain this goal. This excluded any possibility of a newsletter being published that year. I hope that this newsletter will fill you in on the activities of our grotto during the past two years.

Robert Hemperly, Editor

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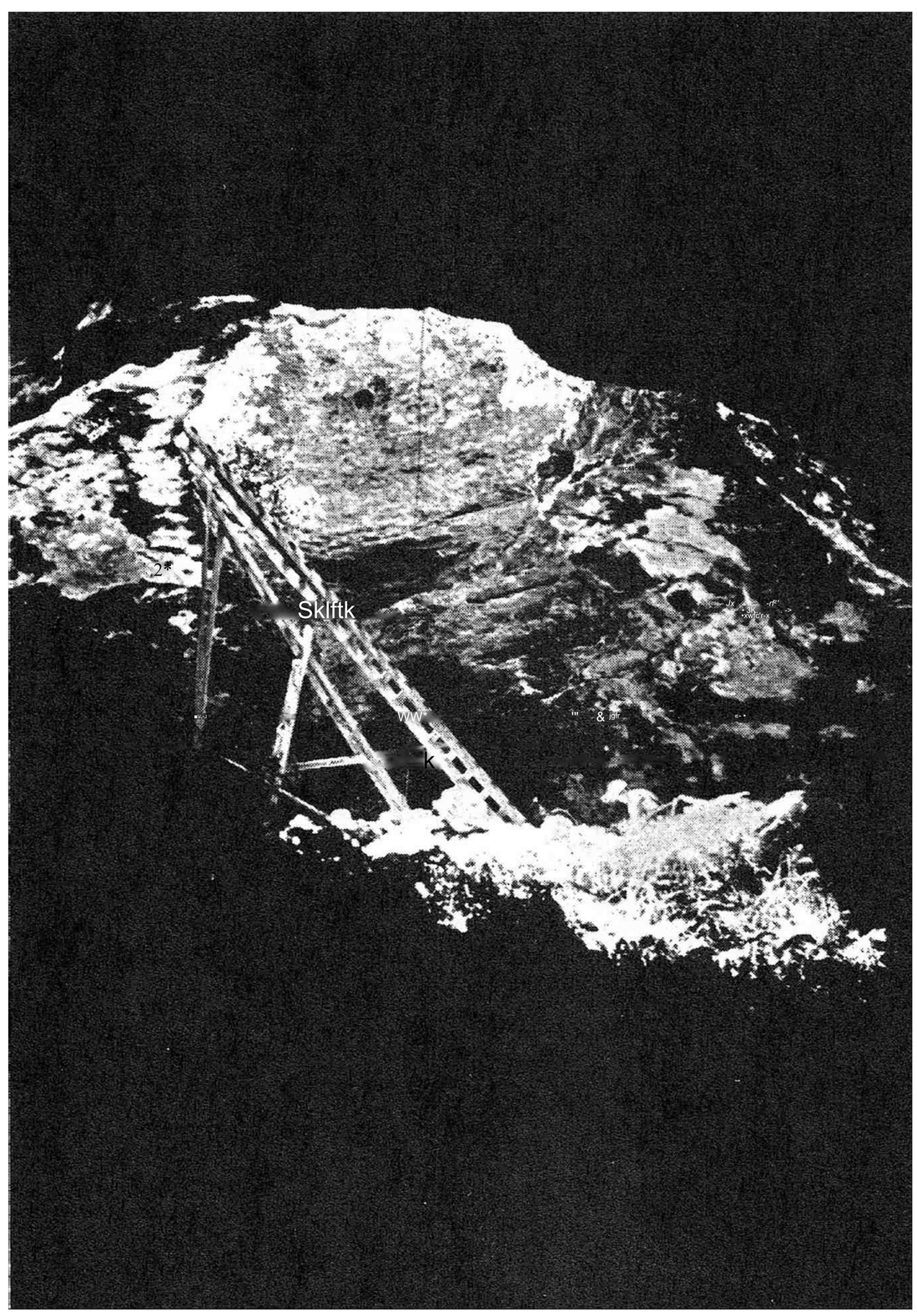


Fern Cave

OFFICERS

1971

President / Logan McNatt
Vice President / Roy Brown
Sec-Treasurer / Sandi Luker
Expedition Chairman / Dale Pate
Equipment Chairman / Blake Harrison
Research Chairman / Mike Walsh

1972

President / Blake Harrison
Vice President / Dale Pate
Secretary / Cindy Kam
Treasurer / Dottie Morris
Expedition Chairman / John Teates
Equipment Chairman / Bud Allen
Research Chairman / Robert Hemperly

announcements

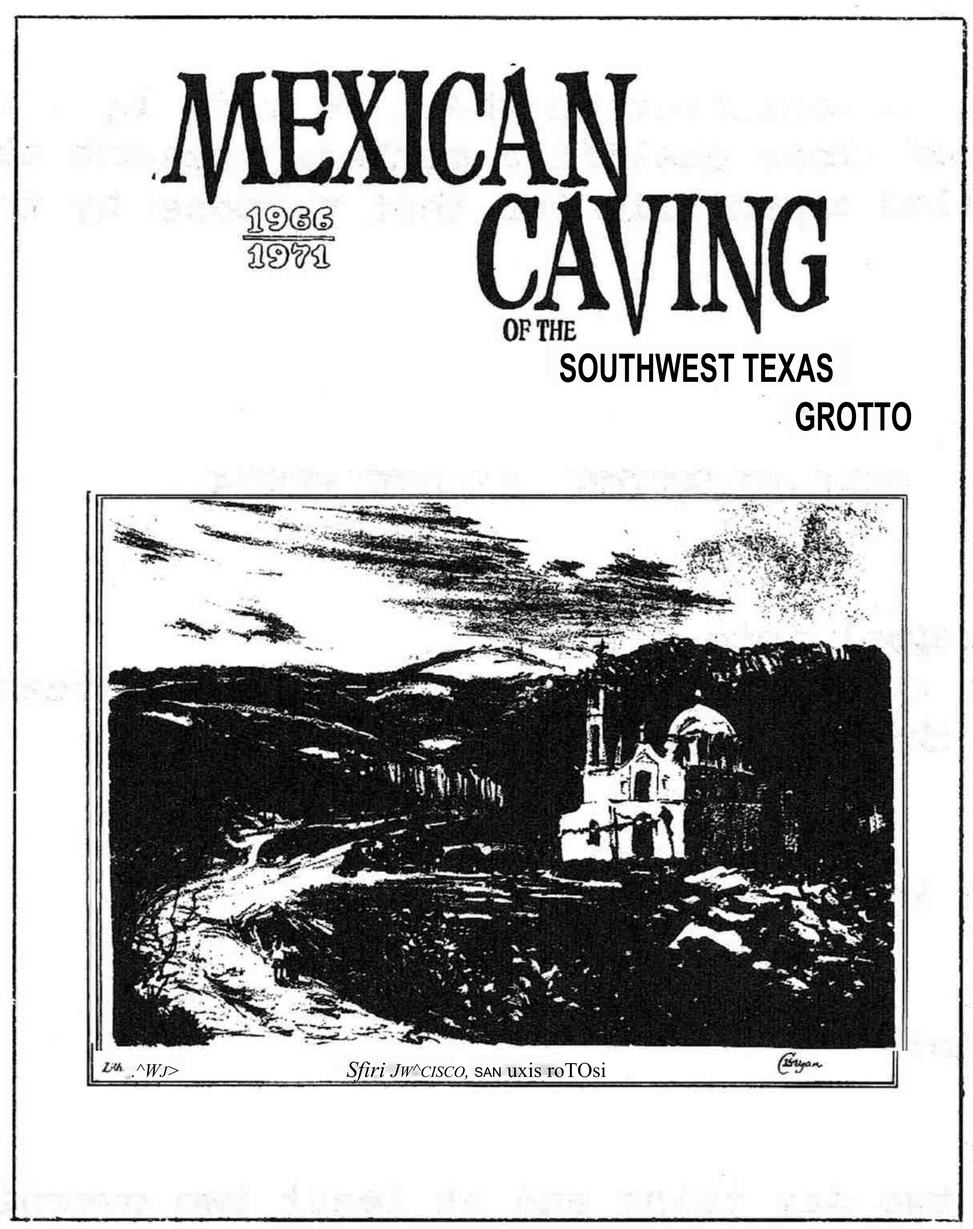
The TSA Convention will be held in San Marcos this year hosted by the SWTSG. It is scheduled for the weekend of April 28-29.

Found: One Vivitar lens cap in the entrance drop of Sotanito de Ahuacatlan. Contact SWTSG.

The Keith Heuss annual birthday party will be held on December 18 of this year. All interested cavers are cordially invited to attend.

SOLD OUT!

Yes, folks, that's what you'll hear next time you walk up to your favorite newsstand looking for this little gem. The Southwest Texas Student Grotto is sorry to announce that all copies of Mexican Caving have been sold or otherwise disposed of.



This 146 page soft bound edition covers material on the caves of central Mexico. It is based on the caving activities of members of the Grotto during the period of 1966-1971. In addition to the 15 pages of photographs, the volume contains over 20 maps. Over one hundred cave descriptions are included. The excellent artwork is by Chuck Bryan of Austin. The printing was done by Jon Everage of Houston.

All 275 copies were sold between March and December of 1972. The members of the SWTSG would like to thank all of you for your support.

CONSTITUTION (By-Laws have been omitted)

I. The name of this organization shall be the Southwest Texas Student Grotto of the National Speleological Society.

II. The purpose of this club shall be to promote interest in and advance in any way the study and science of speleology.

III. The policies toward cave conservation and landowner relationship of this club shall be consistant with the policies of the National Speleological Society and the Texas Speleological Association.

IV. Any changes in this club's general policies shall originate from its membership.

V. Amendments to this constitution shall be made by a two-thirds favorable vote of those qualified members present at any meeting of the club called especially for that purpose by the executive council.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Rig a pit and rappel into a cave.
2. Prusik out of a cave using knots, (at least 50 feet)
3. Be able to tie the following knots:
   a) bowline
   b) sheetbend
   c) fisherman's knot
   d) butterfly
   e) prusik loop
   f) overhand knot
   g) half hitch
   h) clove hitch
4. Go on at least two day trips and at least two overnight trips.
5. Be a member for at least one semester.
6. Be voted on by a simple majority of qualified members.

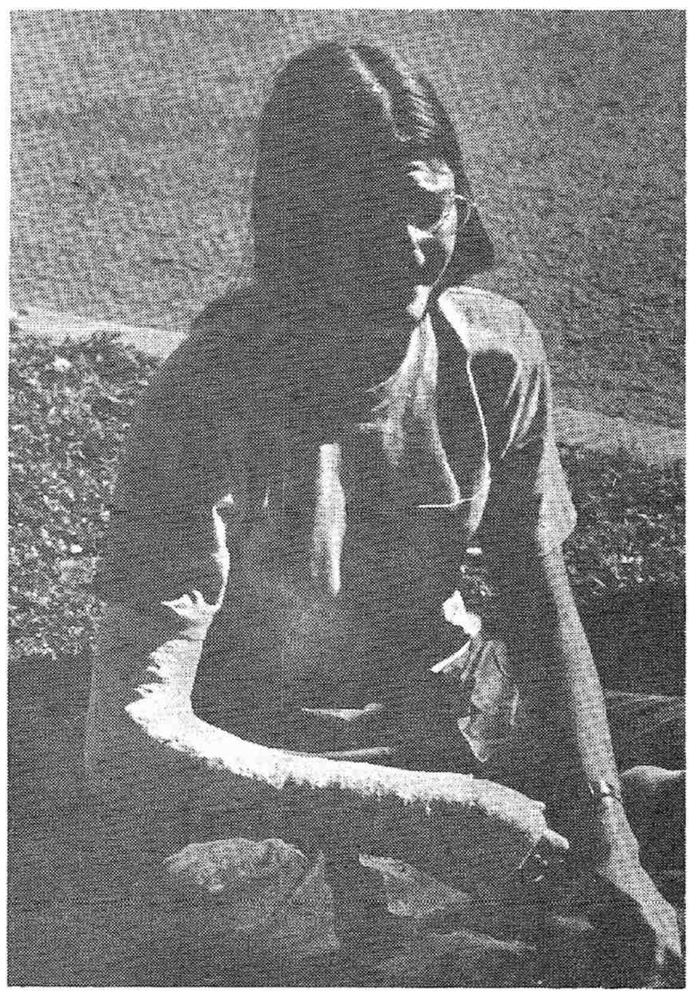
All requirements must be met in the presence of at least one qualified member.

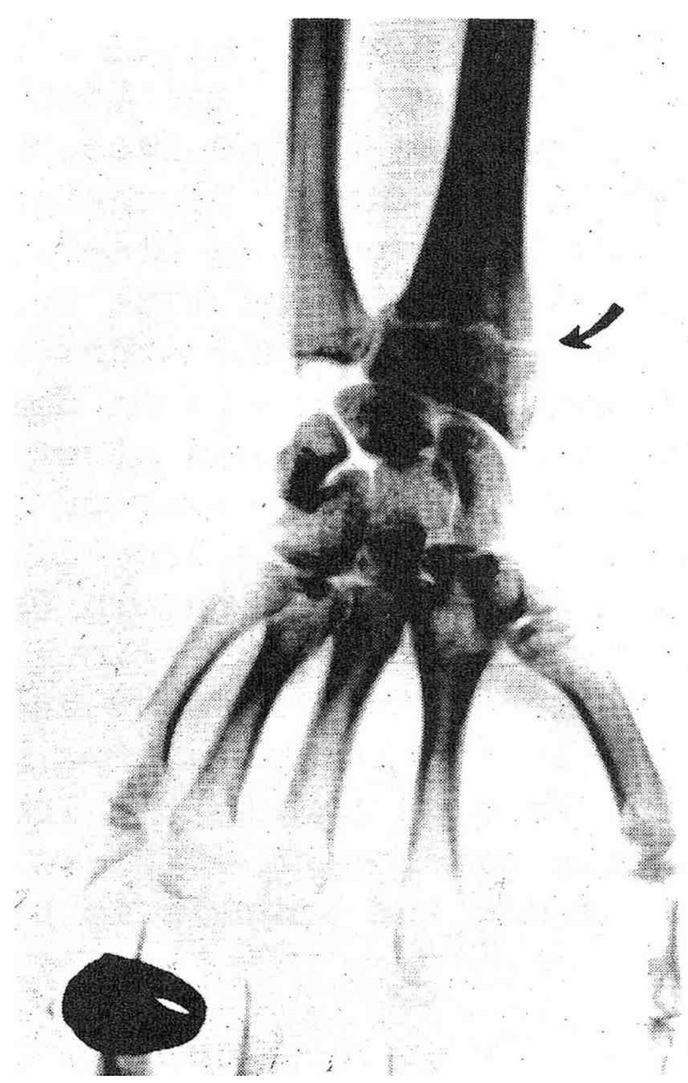
In addition, the member must participate in a number of caving activities sufficient to demonstrate his responsibility and proficiency in basic caving skills, and to determine his eligibility for qualification.

Accident Report

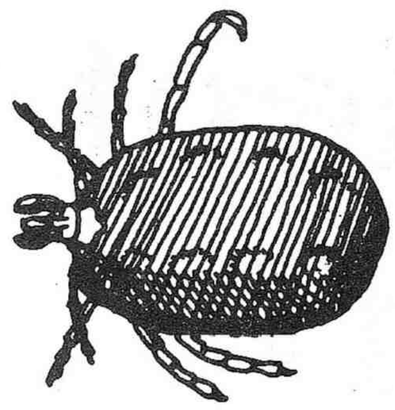
by sandi luker

The incident occurred on the SWTSG's expedition to Sotano de las Golondrinas last Thanksgiving. Although the weather was rainy and misty Thursday on the way up to the pit, Friday was relatively clear and provided excellent conditions for entering the pit. The poor weather returned by Saturday morning, however, and trail conditions were dangerously slick again. It was Saturday evening when the minor accident occurred. It was about 5 o'clock as Stan [Moerbe] and I left the refresco stand at La Laja. We were the last two cavers as everyone was at least 20 minutes ahead of us. About 1/2 mile out from La Laja, I slipped while hiking down a steep, muddy, switchback on the trail. Instinctively I put out my arm to try to catch myself and I fell with all my weight coming down on my outstretched arm. With a sudden SNAP, my arm broke and started to swell slightly. Stan, at this time was not absolutely certain the arm was broken, but quickly, carefully, and securely splint just to be on the safe side. The splint was ingeniously contrived by dismantling a foot jumar and utilizing the foot board, which was a piece of wood 12" by 3". A length of nylon webbing we had was used to secure it. After the splint was in place, Stan lashed my backpack onto his and carried them down the remainder of the trail to Aquismon. After dinner in Valles, we left for the states, where my ailment could be diagnosed by experts. We stopped at the first military installation we could find, the Naval Air Station in Kingsville. After a quick X-ray we learned that the arm was indeed broken. This was quickly remedied by the application of a plaster cast and we left for home. This all goes to show you that caving can be fun as well as educational.





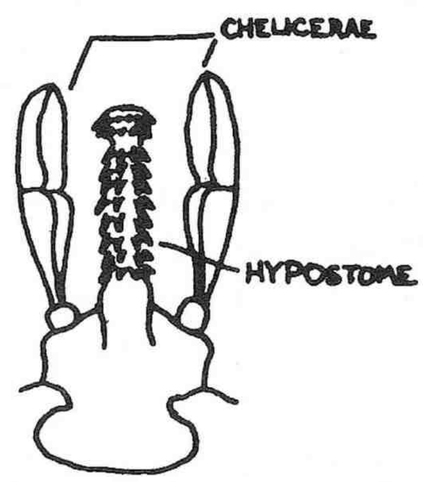
TICKS



Imagine yourself walking through an open field on a hot, dry, dusty day in the El Abra. You brush up against a nearby bush. A few minutes later you feel an ominous crawling sensation on your arm. Further investigation reveals dozens of bloodthirsty little beasties covering the region of contact. Your best course of action is to remove them now while they're still on the move rather than letting them dig in (literally!), otherwise their extraction will prove far more difficult. Congratulations, you have just been introduced to the El Abra's third line of defense, the tick (coming after the heat and thorn forests with Mala Mujer running a close fourth).

In an attempt to understand this troublesome pest which, for some annoying reason is so closely related to some of the more cavitated regions of Mexico, here are a few facts which you may find interesting.

The Ixodoidea or Ticks are the largest of the mites. They are all parasites, which suck the blood of their hosts and therby become enormously distended. When starved they are generally flattened in form. Their chelicerae are their cutting organs, with which they pierce the skin of their hosts, and behind the mouth there is always a hypostome set with backwardly directed teeth, which gives it an extremely firm hold of the skin into which it is thrust. See drawing:



The group Ixodoidea, consists of two families, Argasidae and Ixodidae. The former are parasitic on warm-blooded animals only and are responsible for the spreading of some rather uncommon maladies of men and animals in the Tropics. The trouble caused by ticks may be due to two reasons. Their bites may be irritating wounds, which extraneous bacteria on the foul-mouthed appendages may enter, producing sores and ulcers. More important, however, is the fact that parasitic within the tick there are often Protozoa capable of producing diseases in man and other animals. Heavy infestation by these creatures can cause anaemia in domestic animals, and they carry several noxious diseases to man and other vertebrates. Thus Rocky Mountain spotted fever and Texas fever of cattle in America are transmitted by Dermacentor andersoni and Boophilus annulatus respectively, while man is infected with Rocky Mountain fever, Kenya typhus, Q fever, and Tularemia by the bites of various ticks. The very remarkable feature of these Protozoa is that they can remain alive in the body of the tick, even if the latter is unfed, for months or years. They may even be present in its eggs and in the larvae which hatch from those eggs, so that the next generation of ticks is as dangerous as the first. Tick paralysis of man and animals is believed to be due to toxins secreted

in the saliva of the ticks. Though more frequently observed in tick infested animals, a number of human cases have been reported in the United States, Canada, and Australia. The ascending paralysis is caused by a rapidly engorging female tick attached to the base of the head where the hair may hide its presence for a long period. Complete recovery follows within a day or two of removal of the offending parasite, but death may occur if the paralysis has reached the respiratory centers of the human or animal victim before the tick has dropped off or been removed. The "Garapata" of Mexico, Ornithodorus megnini, attacks, horses, oxen, and sometimes men about the ears.

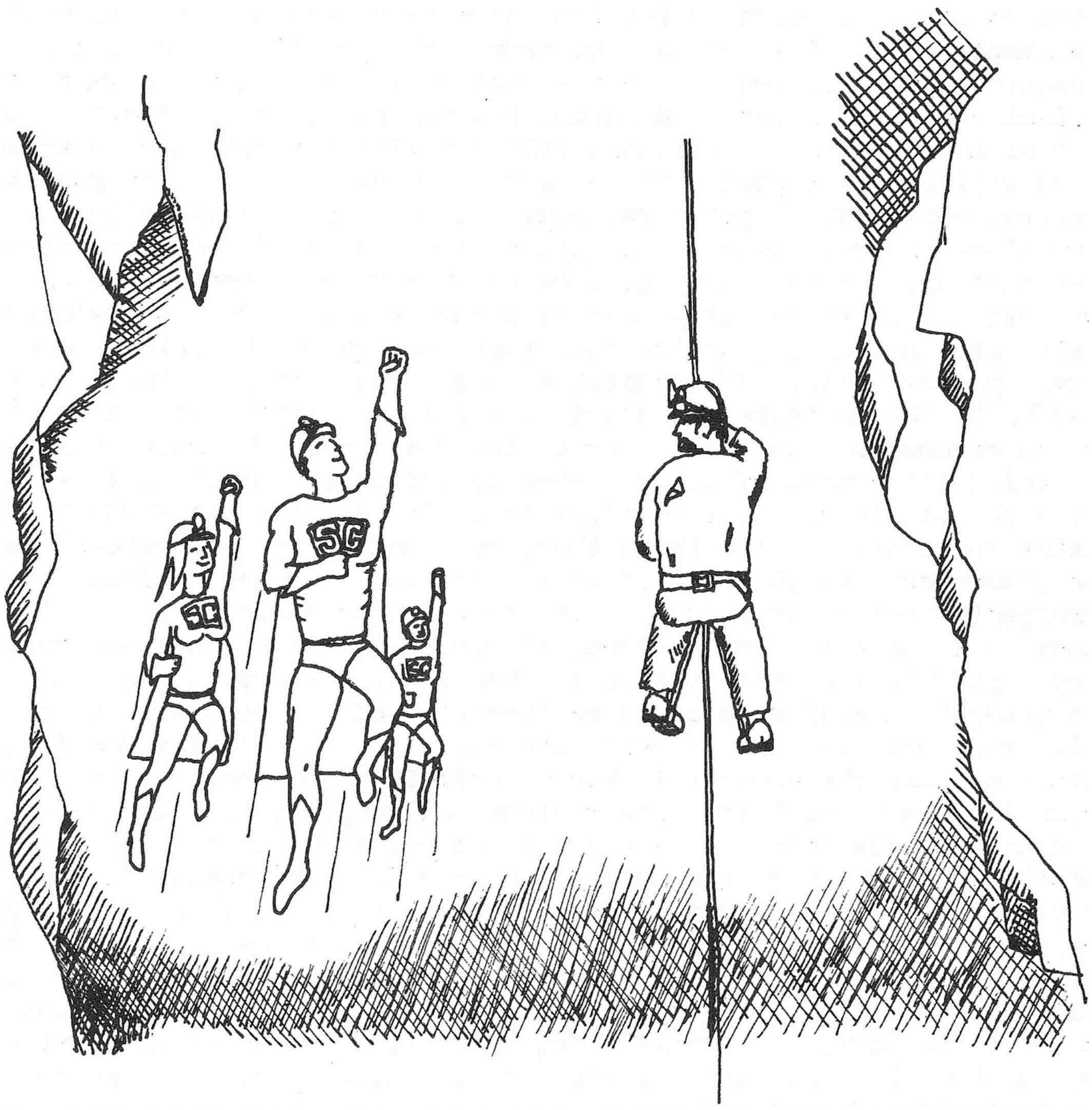
The life history of ticks is of great interest. The eggs, some are laid in a crack in the soil, where they hatch after an interval which varies from days to months and is dependent on the temperature. A larva emerges from each egg, like a small tick but possessing only six legs. These larvae climb the grass and wait in patient expectation until an animal brushes past. The unfed tick when at rest adopts either a questing attitude with the fore legs extended, or an attitude of repose with the legs folded. The ticks respond to gravity, humidity, temperature, smell, light, and tactile stimuli. They climb upwards towards the tips of the leaves of the grass in which they live until they become desiccated when they become active and move downwards again to the moist air near the ground where they recover their water balance by active secretion through the cuticle: then they climb upwards again. If a suitable host happens to pass they are attracted by the moisture and scent of its body, and the vibration caused by its movements, and respond by active questing. The main stimulus governing the ascent of grass blades by larvae of cattle ticks is positive phototaxis to moderate light intensities: the ticks shelter from direct sunlight. In the field they are found to be more exposed in the early morning when they are often at the tops of grass stalks. The strongest questing behaviour occurs in response to odours, but vibrations, air currents, interrupted illumination, warmth, and moisture all play a part in the reactions to the host. At the approach of an animal the young tick manifests great excitement, and, if possible, seizes its hair as it passes. Once secure, the larva plunges its rostrum into the skin and sucks the creature's blood until it is gorged. It then unhooks its claws, withdraws its rostrum and drops to the ground again. Here it secretes itself in a crevice and rests while its huge meal is absorbed and other changes take place within. When these are complete, it casts its cuticle and becomes a nymph, with eight legs, but sexually immature. The nymph climbs the grass and repeats the actions of the larva. The moult which follows this second gorging produces a mature male or female tick which again seeks a host. Fertilization takes place on the third host, the female being the active member of the pair during mating. Finally, the well-fed and fertilized female drops to the ground again and lays her eggs.

Although in some species of ticks, all the changes from larva to adult may be passed through without leaving the first host, it is a more general rule that three hosts are visited. It is a remarkable feature of ticks that they are well adapted to this extraordinary life history, for they are able to undergo prolonged fasts without dying,

and they seldom let slip a chance of attacking a host. Yet thousands must perish before an animal comes into their neighborhood; as Shipley remarks ; "it is terrible to think of the amount of unsatisfied desire which must be going on in the tick world."

Cloudsley-Thompson, J.L.; Spiders, Scorpions, Centipedes and Mites, Pergamon Press, London, 1958.

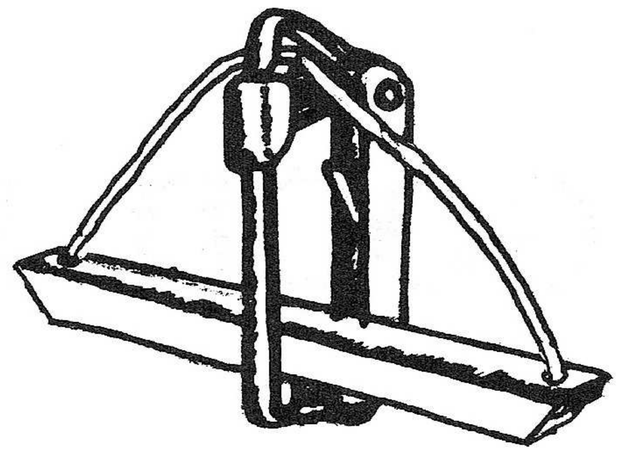
Savory, Theodore H.; The Biology of Spiders, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1928.

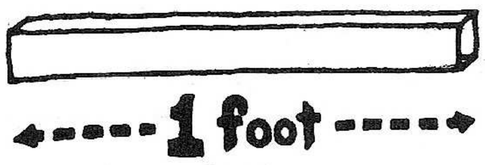


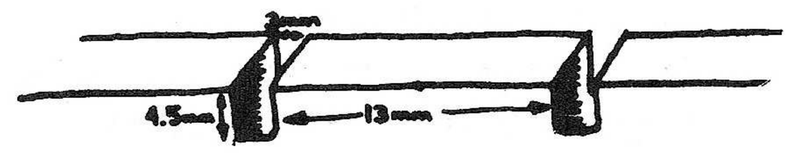
"What's wrong with being a super caver?"

HOW TO MAKE
YOUR VERY OWN

Foot Jumar



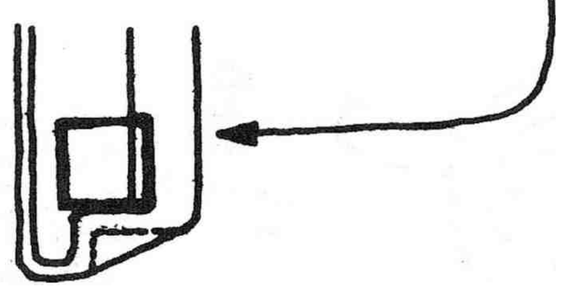




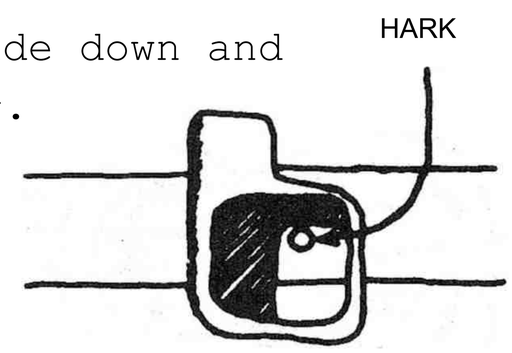
A. Procure a one foot portion of 1"X1" square aluminum tubing

By means of a hacksaw and file, proceed to create two paral lei grooves, each 3mm wide and 13mm apart The width of a 10" flat file is almost exactly 3mm The depth of these two grooves should be 4.5mm at the top and 7mm at the bottom A jumar should be handy at all times to check for a snug fit

When finished, it should look like this when set on the bottom on the jumar.

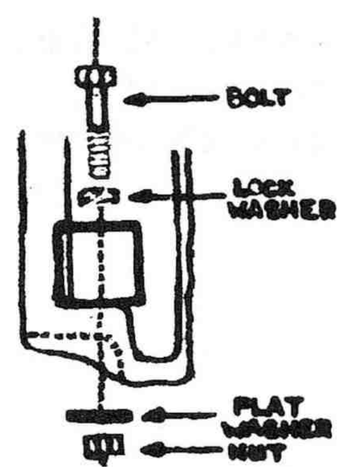


B. With the bar in position, turn the jumar upside down and with a pencil, mark a circle 1/4" in diameter.



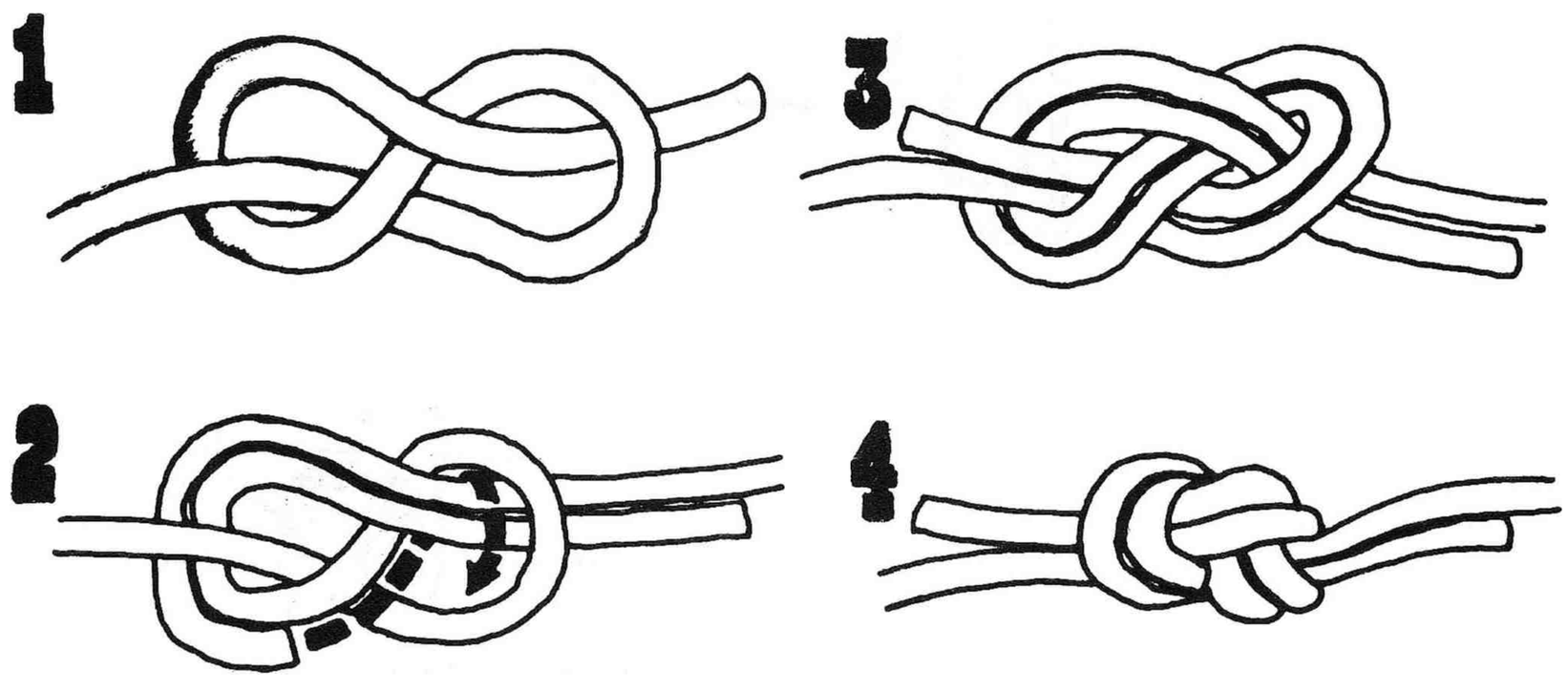
Remove the bar and with a center punch, tap the center of this circle. Drill out the circle until it is large enough to accept a bolt. While you have your drill out, you might drill some holes about 1/2" from each end large enough to permit passage of a portion of three»eighths goldline. Saw off a triangle from each end of the bar.

C. Replace the bar in the jumar and install the nut, bolt, and washers as shown. Tighten with the appropriate wrenches until the lock washer sets. Thread the rope through the holes, (about 1 1/2' should be sufficient), and adjust it to fit your feet snugly. Now tie the ends with a figure eight knot.



A GOOD KNOT

One of the lesser known knots used in caving for tying two ropes together is the figure eight bend, or flemish bend. This knot, through use and much experimentation, has done a good job of proving itself. In a test done on the strength of knots by Eastern Mountain Sports, the figure eight bend proved to be the strongest knot among the knots tested. The rope used in testing was 7/16 goldline, a commonly used rope among cavers. Some of the knots that the figure eight bend was in contention with were the fisherman's knot, the bowline, the butterfly and the water knot. The figure eight bend proved to be far superior to any of the other in their test strength. Some of the tests were done using a weight of 150 pounds and dropped for a distance of 15 feet with one end of the rope secured to a stationary point. Whether or not this method of testing was an effective one can be left up to the individual. One thing can be derived from this test. Under the same conditions that many other knots were subjected to, the figure eight bend proved to be the strongest.



Although the high breaking strength is an outstanding feature of the figure eight bend, that is not the only thing to be considered about the quality of the knot. The knot is quite simple to tie, but one of the qualities of a good knot is its ability to be easily untied. This fact may have an important bearing on where and how the knot is to be used. Sometimes the figure eight bend has a tendency to be quite difficult to untie. When tying the knot, one probably should use as a safety, at least a half hitch on either end to keep the ends tucked away neatly. Overall the knot is a strong, neat, compact knot that deserves more use among cavers.

The Adventures of Christopher Caver

by dale pate and jeri jones

One hot, dusty, Sunday, there came to the small town of Caverville, not to be mistaken for that other famous caving village of Carty Valla, a vehicle of a sort that no one in those parts had ever seen. The residents of the town that saw the strange vehicle noticed the large solid steel bumper and thousands of decals, mostly Mexican Turista stickers, plastered all over the windows and sides of the vehicle. The questions that ran through their minds were all the same. "What in the blazes is that driving through our fine town?" Immediately the thought of long-haired hippie communists came to their minds.

At the local gas station, which was also a small grocery store, the local post office, the bank, and numerous other official services, there worked an enthusiatic youngster of 18 years, by the name of Christopher Caver. It was this boy's great grandfather that founded the town and gave it the name of Caverville. It just so happened that the strange decaled vehicle pulled up to the pump to get some gasoline.

Christopher saw the vehicle drive up and though somewhat leery of what he saw, he rushed out of the store to give the strangers prompt and courteous service. As he rounded the corner of the bumper, the door on the driver's side opened up and a large guy dropped down the 3 1/2 feet from the running board to the ground. "Fill me up, will you," asked the man. "Yessir," answered Christopher and he walked around back. About this time the oddest assortment of weird people had lowered a cable ladder and were climbing out of the back. All in all there was about four of them. Christopher tried not to stare, but being from a small country town he didn't get to see too many outsiders, especially some like these. Some of them even had long hair, but the worst part was that they weren't girls.

Christopher went on about his business as best he could only after getting one of the tall ones who got out of the back to put the nozzle in the gas tank for him. It was slightly out of reach for Christopher's 5' 11" frame. Along about this time the large driver approached Christopher. "Hello, my name is Glen Markham," introduced the driver. "Sure is a nice truck you got there," blurted Christopher. "My name is Christopher; Christopher Caver."

"Christopher CAVER, why I guess you're the one we want to see then," answered Glen*

"Me, why me?" asked Christopher*

"Me and my friends here explore caves and we've heard of several caves being around here and maybe you can help us locate them or at least tell us if you know of any around,[11] asked Glen*

Christopher replied, "Caves, sure I know where some caves are* Why, there is supposed to be one here that connects to Wonder Shaft over in San Mucous* Do you think this could be true?"

Glen answered, "Well, I kind of doubt it, but we would appreciate any help you could give us in finding some caves* We'd even take you through with us if you wanted to go®"

Christopher answered, "I know where there are two, maybe three caves I could take you to, but I have to see about going in with you. Some of them have bats in them and I'd hate to get them in my hair."

Several others had come up and at this they all began to laugh. One was heard to mutter, "Who ever heard of a bat getting into one's hair. Ridiculous ."

Glen yelled out, "Hey Al, come here. I think we've found us a guide to several caves."

Alfred Tarner stepped down from the door frame of the store and rambled over. "Far Out! Hello there, my name's Al Tarner. We've got the whole afternoon, so do you think you could show us where there are some caves today?"

[n]Give me about an hour and I'll be off work, so I'll be able to show ya," answered Christopher*

So Christopher Caver collected the money for the gas, only after telling the strangers that they would have to pay in American money, and the new friends he had met, waited the hour. An hour later, Christopher came running out with a brand new flashlight and about 12 packets of batteries. With a little encouragement and a hand, Christopher jumped into the front of the truck and off they went.

As they drove out of town, many of the citizens gave a sigh of relief, thankful to be rid of the strangers. Of course, most were unaware that Christopher Caver was with them.

After about 45 minutes of driving on a dusty road, Christopher yollered, "Whoa, we'll have to walk from here. It's about a mile through that field."

"Walk, man this truck can go anywhere," replied Glen, "Does anybody own that land?"

"Yeah, Old Man Leeman," answered Christopher.

"Where's his house, we have to ask permission before we can go to the cave," asked Al, who was also in front.

"Oh, he lives back in town, he used to live out here but since he's gotten too old to ranch the land, he leases it out," replied Christopher. "The ranch house is about two miles down the road* Mr. Blackman leases the land."

After finding the ranch house and obtaining permission, the group arrived back at the cutoff and finally at the cave entrance. Immediately, everyone jumped out and stared at the entrance.

"Egads," blurted out Carol Camwell, the only girl along the trip, "This could be another Carlsmad. Look at the size of that entrance."

Christopher sensed the excitement that was going through everyone- and he began to become excited also, for after all he was fixing to enter his first cave. A sparkle appeared in Christopher's eyes as he watched the group getting all their equipment prepared. Christopher felt as if he was with a group of gods. Later though, he only recognized them as Super Cavers.

Randy Ropeburn, known as the nurd of the group, saw Christopher standing around and he walked over. Heykiddidyoudecidetogoinwithus. Igotsomegearyoucanuseifyoudid."

"Excuse me, but could you talk a little slower. Everything you said was all blurred," asked Christopher.

"Oh," Ropeburn added, "Yeah, I guess I could. I said that I had some gear you could use if you wanted to go in with us."

"Do you mean that? Gosh, I would like to go in with the group if it would be alright," Christopher exclaimed.

"Why sure, I've got everything you need. I always bring along eight extra hardhats and twelve extra carbides just in case someone needs some stuff. I also brought along my fifty gallon barrel of carbide, my two sets of expensive walkie-talkies, 1000 feet of rope, three sets of vertical gear, four cases of Dr. Pepper, 'cause everybody always likes Dr. Pepper. I also brought three sleeping, bags, a large assortment of cooking utensils, and just about anything else one needs for a week-end trip. Yessir, I always come prepared," Randy quoted proudly.

"My gosh, you must be the best caver around. I'd be proud to borrow your equipment, Sir," answered Christopher. He also asked, "What is that?"

"A carbide lamp, what else. Oh yeah, just call me Randy. That's my name, Randy Ropeburn that is," replied Randy, "This carbide lamp has a long history in which I won't go into now, but this is what we uses, when exploring the caves.

As Randy helped Christopher to select his gear and show him how to use it, the rest of the group had gotten their gear together and were ready to go. As everyone already knows, a new or virgin (which ever is preferred) cave brings the blood of most savers to a boil, that is, so to speak. Randy and Christopher were now ready and the group headed to the entrance. There were seven in total, including Christopher. At the entrance the group stopped to light their carbides. They also admired the large domed entranceway. By this time, Christopher was in a trance because this is something new and the lure of the cave was starting to get its hold on one more poor soul.

Glen, who was also the leader, started down the breakdown slope and the rest followed. Christopher had gotten behind Glen so he could see many of the things first. The first room, which was part of the entrance was large and had many large columns in it.

"Wow!" exclaimed Rick Sledge, the tall one who helped. Christopher put the gas pump nozzle in the gas tank. "This entrance looks like the entrance to Cottenrock Cave."

As the group continued on, they rounded a corner and Christopher looked back to glimpse the last sunlight he would see for the day. Until this time, Christopher had been silent, but now he began to do nothing

but ask questions. What is this large thing? What do you suppose is the other side of that giant rock? How far do you think we've come? What will we do if the roof caves in? Do you think there are any bats in here? Ect..Ect...Ect I guess everyone can remember asking a lot of questions on their first caving trip, so was the case of Christopher.

"Has anyone ever (explored this cave before, Christepher?" asked Alfred.

“Only Old Man Leeman, who didn’t go in very far and a group of kids that went in here a long time ago. They said they explored for miles but no one paid much attention to them," answered Christopher.

Along about this time, the passage split into three different ways, of which the left passage was the largest. They were in a quandry as to which passage they should take when Carol askd, "Which way do you think we should go, Christopher?"

Beats me," said Christopher. "All I know is that I'm ready to go.”

Rick brought up the fact that the left passage appeared to be the largest and suggested that the grpup explore that one first, leaving the other two for later. That decided it and the group explored on. As the group continued, strange new sights were seen and as the walls close in on the cavers, the ceiling heightened until it went out of sight. The floor had turned from rough, broken rocks to smooth and sandy. All of a sudden a strange noise was heard and the cavers stepped out into a 1arge room full of bats (of all things).

Christopher turned white as a sheet and exclaimed, "Bats, bats, they're going to get in my hair! Let's get out of here!”

Ben Clinton, the last caver to be introduced, began to chuckle. He then walked over to Christopher and put his hand on his boulder. "Don't worry Christopher, most things you've heard about bats are all false. They won't bother you. The only reason they're flying around is because our lights and noise have bothered them."

Seeing that this was the bat room of the cave, the group decided to go back and quickly check the other passages since they had already been in for three hours and they had promised Mr. Blackman that they would be back in eight hours. Before they went back though, they had to stop and re-carbide their lamps.

"Holy smokes!" yelled out Christopher as his carbide burst into flames due to his carelessness of not putting the bottom on tight enough after refilling it with carbide. After getting the help of Ben, the group continued their trip back.They got back to the place where the passage forked, and they decided on the middle passage. Though much smaller than the left passage, it was still walking passage and the air seemed much fresher than in the bat room, at least to Christopher it did. As they continued on, the passage became lower until they were all duck walking. As usual, Randy was bringing up the rear and saying, Quack! Quackg Soon the passage got even lower and it turned into crawling.

"What are we doing crawling when there is still alot of passage to explore," exclaimed Rick.

With this, the group decided to turn back, so they all turned around and finally arrived back at the junction room, which they had christened it on the crawl back. Back at the junction room, they rested and it was

decided to leave the other passageway to be explored at a later date and head back since they did have a time limit• No use making the rancher mad for that would only be bad for the caver-rancher relation - ships in this new area.

After retracing their steps, they finally came to the entrance room once again. They couldn't really tell though, because it had become dark outside. After a brief rest in which the group once again recarbided and sat silently staring at the cave and its formations, the weary cavers began the climb up the breakdown slope to the outside. As they walked out into the starry night, Christopher turned back to the cave and stared once more at the inner beauty he had just left. A peace came over his mind and as he stared into the internal darkness, he knew he would be back, for he had become a true caver.

Christopher came awake with a start and he quickly followed after his new found friends. As he caught up, Glen asked, "How was it, Christopher?"

"It was really great. How far do you think vie went?" asked Christopher.

"I'd say we went about 4000 feet or so," replied Glen.

Everyone threw their gear into the truck and they rode back to the road and on to the ranch house. Since the weekend was about all used up, permission was gained to come back next weekend to continue their exploration.

Glen and Al talked to Christopher about the many different caves they had been to all the way back to Caverville. They could tell that they had gone and convinced Christopher that caving was the greatest thing there was. They figured they had best show him what he needed to know instead of him finding out on his own, and perhaps getting hurt.

"Hey Christopher," blurted Al, "How about going back with us next weekend. We're planning on mapping the cave or at least as much as we can. You can still show us the other caves around here also."

"Gee, do you really mean it? I'll be ready. I don't know how to map, but I'll help out if I can," answered Christopher.

"I've been meaning to ask you. Does that cave have a name?" asked Glen.

"Everyone around here just calls it Leeman Cave after Old Man Leeman," answered Christopher.

"Then Leeman Cave it is," quipped Glen.

As they reached Caverville, they stopped to let Christopher off. "See you next weekend, Christopher," shouted out the entire group as they drove off.

And so ended the first caving trip of Christopher Caver.

ROCK!!

Photo by Calvin Walker

Will the strong, sturdy VW bus hold up to the force of a 240 pound rock falling from thirty feet or more? If there is any doubt in your answer, ask someone who has had an experiment conducted on the idea.

Actually the "experiment" was not "conducted", it just happened. (Or did it.) During the early part of August Blake Harrison, his VW bus, and approximately five other cavers left San Marcos on a sightseeing journey to the NSS convention in White Salmon, Washington. After several successful days of sightseeing, the car and crew were just outside the town of Kooshia, Idaho. While driving along a river with a thirty foot cliff immediately to the right and another 150 foot of slope above that, the driver stopped to let one of the group get out and do his good deed for the day. It was to remove a burning log about the size of a football from the middle of the road. The log came from above where there was a small forest fire burning.

Whammmm. - There was an explosion like effect. Glass flew everywhere. The rock had won. All that it took was some heat to force it off of the mountain and the thirty foot fall (plus who knows how much of that slope it traveled down) to win, hands down. Fortunately no one was hurt. Results: one broken vent window, one broken turn indicator, and one very ripped open VW with a door that lacked eight inches of closing. We left. A report was made to the local sheriff and the trip was continued, with a slight limp, and a big drag. Three thousand miles later and back in San Marcos, Blake was presented with a gift-souvenir. To his surprise it was his very own VW rock. Gee, that rock sure meant a lot to him, about $600 worth of damage. - Beware of falling rocks.

J. Jones

TRIP REPORTS

January, 1971
Place: Blow Hole, Punkin Cave, Deep Cave
People: Ralph Manyer, Jerry Moore, Dale Pate, Cindy Pardinek, Mike Walsh
Report by: Dale Pate

Leaving San Marcos in my car, we arrived at the campground an hour or so after dark. We had to wait in Carta Valley for Kiki and her group. When we arrived at the camp, we immediately got our gear together, found Blow Hole and entered. We went as far as the room past the small blasted crawlway. The next day, Jerry, Mike, and myself went into San Angelo for the BOG meeting (TSA)• We returned later that day. That night Jerry Bryant, Jerry Moore, Mike, and myself looked for Deep Cave but couldn't find it. The next morning we entered Deep Cave where we took a quick tour of Sherwood Forest and other parts of the cave. We then entered Blow Hole once again and explored past the chimney. Friday night (the night we had arrived) we practiced rope work in Punkin Cave. We met a group from U.T. that night plus two more groups from San Marcos.

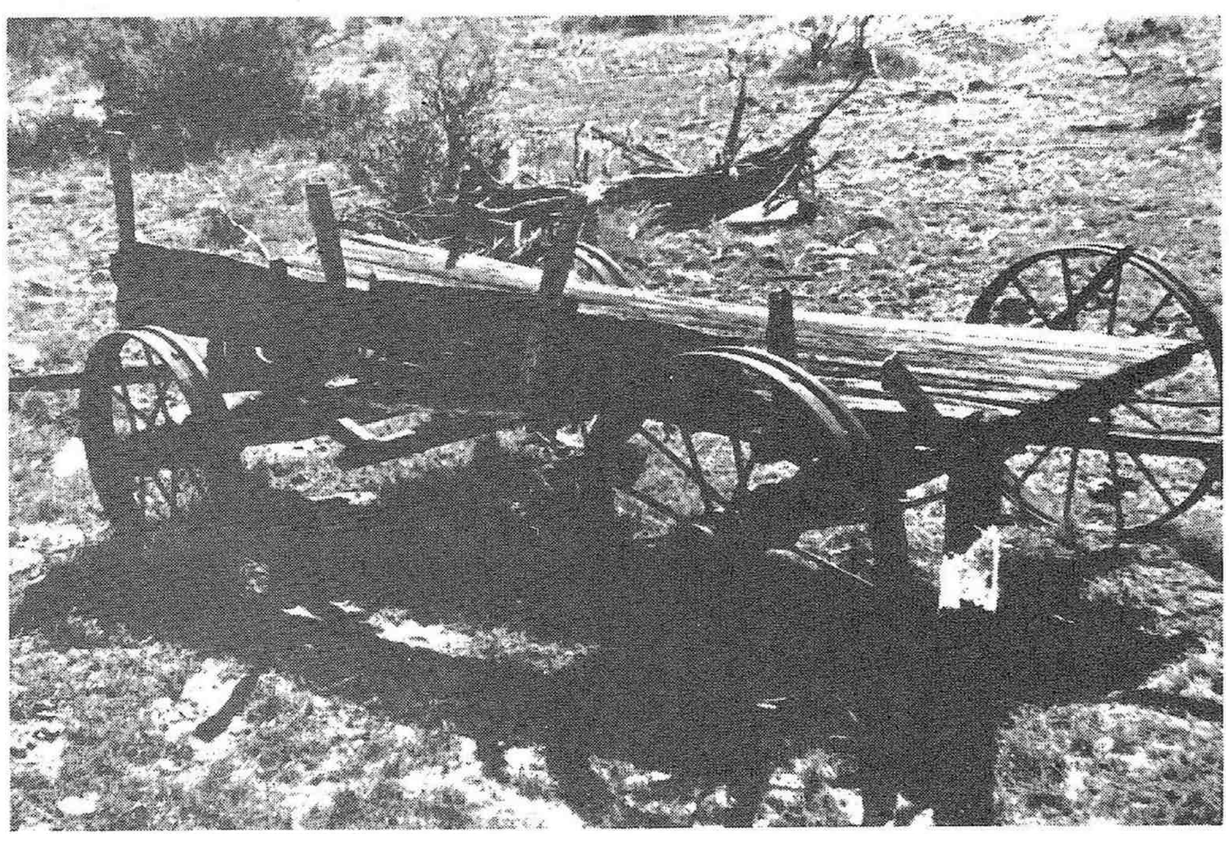
January 22-24, 1971
Place: Langtry Lead, Emerald Sink, Mile Canyon
People: Blake Harrison, Sandi Luker, Ross McAlpine, Jerry Moore, Dottie Morris, Dale Pate
Report by: Dale Pate

Thinking that we were to meet another group we stopped at the roadside park overlooking Pecos Canyon. Not wanting to stay there we headed to Mile Canyon about 12:00 that night where we practiced on the ropes for an hour or more. We then drove back to Pecos Canyon where we spent the night. The next morning we did the traditional caver's rappel off the Pecos Bridge which has a 220' drop. Ross went first and then I went off. It was something else to be hanging in the middle of a huge canyon such as that. Wow! Sandi then came down and then Jerry and last of all Blake. Sandi and myself then hiked to a large shelter while the rest hiked out of the canyon. Ross prusiked out. The shelter continued back for about '100' with a perfect view of the whole area. We determined it was definitely an Indian shelter at one time. We then went out. Then wanting to go caving we went to Langtry Lead where we went to the Big Room but not through the crawlways. Then Ross, Blake, Jerry, and myself went to Emerald Sink where we threw boulders down the 142' drop and then left. We then tried to locate where the Langtry Road Cut caves had once been. Unfortunately we found them and they are now closed. I never entered them, but many people claimed these small caves to be some of the most beautiful in the state. We then headed home.

February 12-14, 1971
Place: Indian Creek Cave
People: Mike Adams, Gail Johnson, Stan Moerbe, Mike Walsh, Dale Pate
Report by: Dale Pate

We got to the cave Saturday and entered. It. has about a 100' drop and 2-4 miles of walking passage. We first went upstream and had to swim at one place. We went upstream to the north siphon. Going back downstream we had a short mud fight and found a terrific mudslide. We then headed downstream where we found the water to be moving. We continued downstream and the further we went, the deeper it got. We finally had to cling to the walls to keep fro. falling in. We came to two or three places where we had to swim. We finally came to the dry part of the cave and we went as far as Bennifur's Hell where Stan and myself went through. Stan had a bit of trouble, but he made it both ways. We then turned back and stopped to go up to Alice's Wonderland. Mike and Bob stayed at the top of the first ladder. Stan, Mike, Gail, and myself went up the ladder that is leaning over the 70' crevice. Gail decided to stay there after seeing the next ladder going up the formation. Stan, Mike, and myself continued up to find that the ladder was held on by looping it over a formation that was small to begin with. We then came to Alice's Wonderland. WowI It was beautiful. Fantastic would be the only thing to describe it. After taking some pictures we went down and continued out of the cave. Since Mike Adams, Bob, and Gail had never done any rope work, it took them quite a long time to get out. That left Stan and myself at the bottom for a couple of hours extra. We got out about 14 hours after we had entered finding that a norther had hit. It was rather cold.

Leaving the next morning we headed to Tarpley where Mike had a lead on some caves. After getting permission to go on the land, we hiked on a hill for about an hour. On top of the hill we found a crevice running places. We also found one large indention and a small sink on the same hill. Neither one was very big. We then headed for San Marcos after finding that we were on the wrong hill. OH WELL!

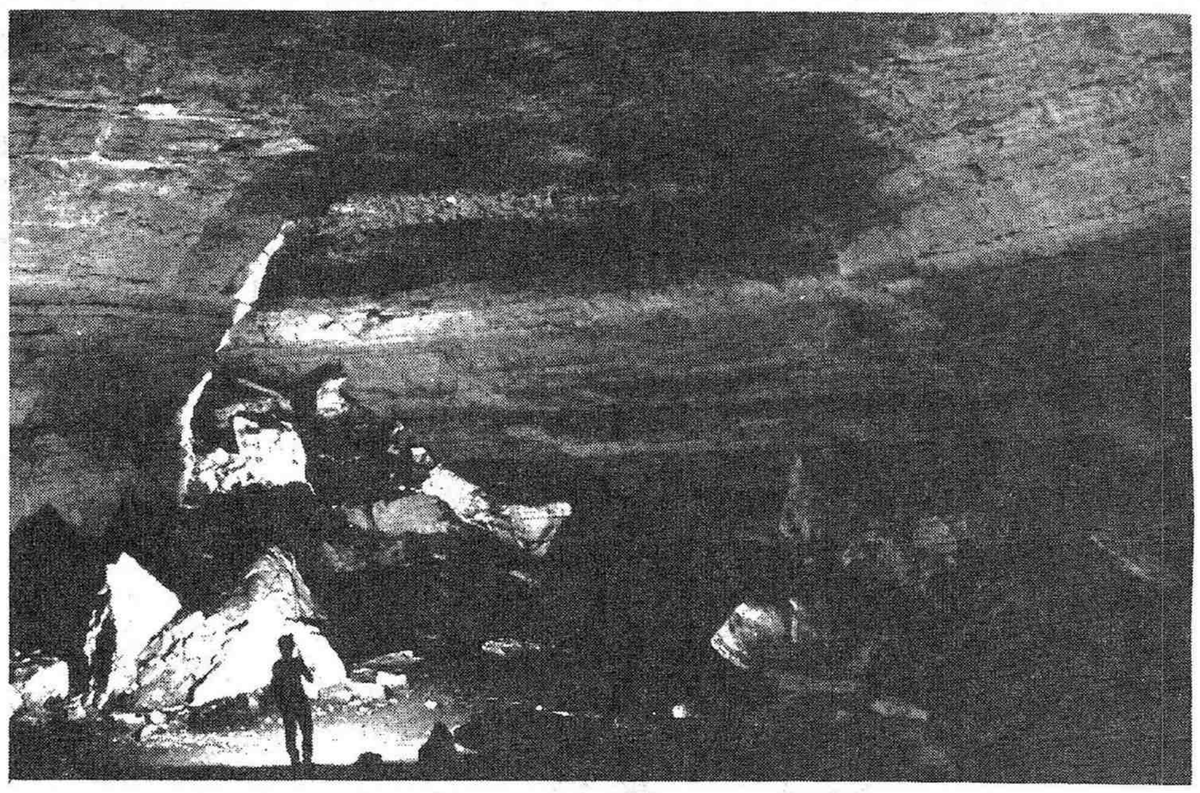


Old Style Caving Vehicle

Pages 21-22 were missing in the scanned copy. Probably pages 23-61 were just misnumbered and no pages were actually missing. --Elliott 12/13/2022

April 2-4, 1971
Place: Fisher's Fissure, Litter Barrel Cave, Century Caverns
People: Jerry Bryant, Bill Eneks, Keith Heuss, Sandi Luker, Dale Pate, Mike Walsh
Report by: Dale Pate

Wanting to do some photography we first went to Century Caverns to obtain permission to take pictures in there on Sunday. We then drove to Garner where we spent the night. We then drove to Brackettville and got in touch with Tom Sargent to try to go into Kickapoo Caverns. He knew Bill, but was still reluctant to let us go in because of the fact that he is fixing to commercialize the caverns. After spending quite a long time looking for Diablo Cave to no avail, we gave up and drove to Comstock and Litter Barrel Cave. We entered the cave and found it to be better than we had expected, but not as long. We entered the crawlway which had a super amount of air blowing in it. Being the smallest, I got to go first, but after a while it tightened in on me so I turned back. These crawlways need to be dug out. There is something farther on, I am almost positive of it. After leaving this cave, we headed for the Road Cut Caves. Unfortunately they were still closed and probably will be forever. We then went to Fisher's Fissure which we found delightful. The entrance chimney was something else. The whole cave was really great because it was almost all chimneying. There were two drops where we had to use ropes. I recommend this cave for anyone who likes to chimney. We got out of the cave very late that night and drove back to Garner where we spent the night once again. Sunday we drove to Century Caverns to take pictures. We found the owner to be very friendly. We went in to take pictures. Mike, Jerry, Bill, and myself started swimming downstream in search of a water crawlway that had been reported. Though we never found it, we had an enjoyable time wading and swimming around formations that were hanging down in the water. We then got out of the water and helped Keith take quite a few pictures. We then headed out and back to San Marcos.



Fern Cave

April, 1971
Place: Ash Cave
Peoples Greyson Knapp, Sandi Luker, Jerry Moore, Dale Pate, Mike Walsh
Report by: Dale Pate

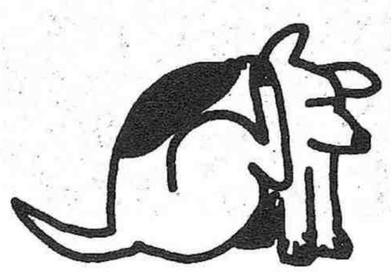
This is a small cave located outside of San Marcos. We visited it because of rumors that new passage had been found in it. There were no new passages though Greyson and myself checked several small leads. This was a typical Hays County Cave.

April, 1971
Place: Ezell's Cave
People: Jerry Moore, Dale Pate, Mike Walsh
Report by: Dale Pate

We went down the first drop in the cave in order to measure the drop. The club is planning to take out the ladder very soon and we needed the measurement for a cable ladder. We did not go past the first room.

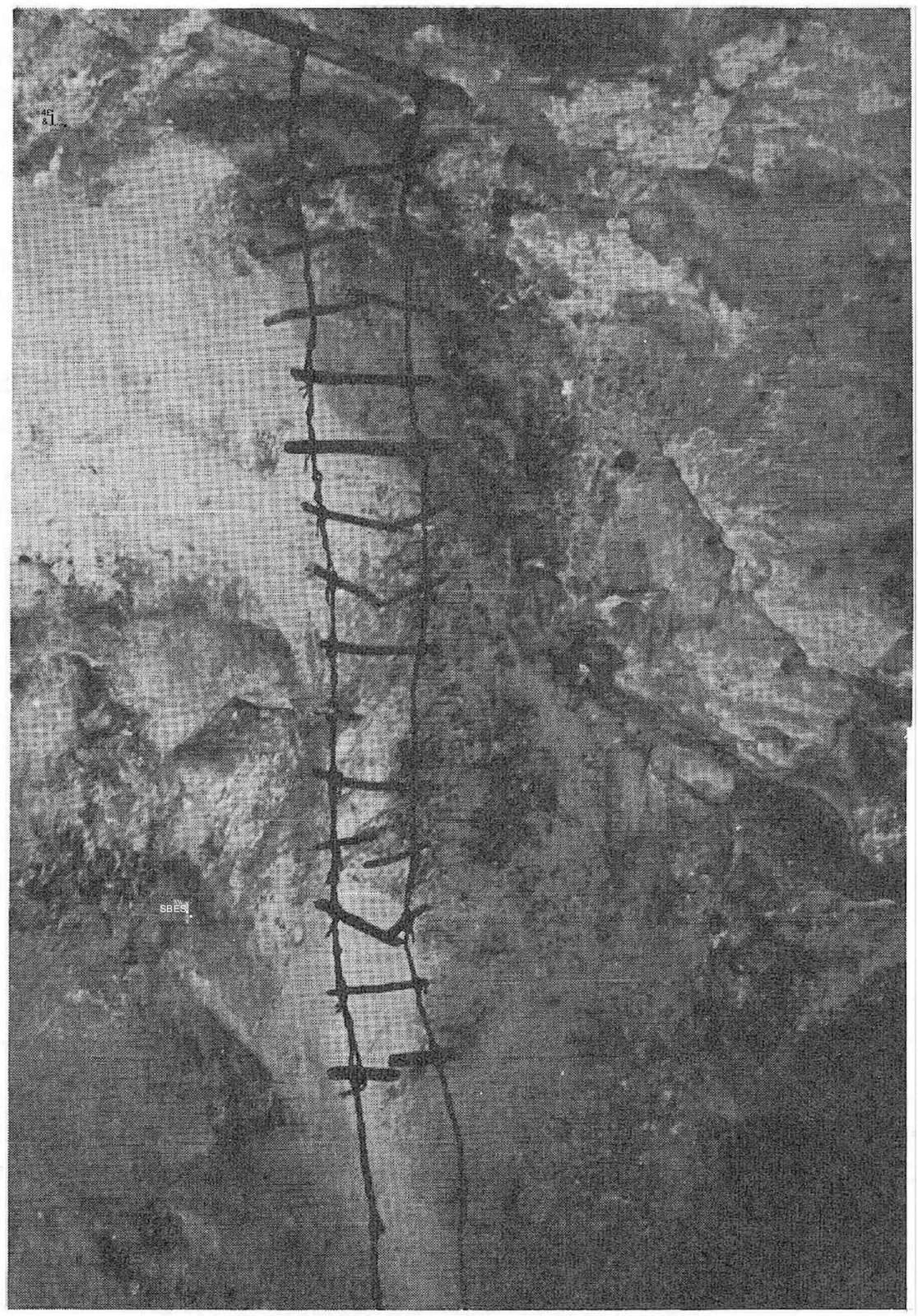
April 25, 1971
Place: Airmen's Cave
People: Keith Heuss, Kandy Hill, Dale Pate, Brian Peterson, Mike Walsh, Dan Watson
Report by: Dale Pate

Finding out about this cave from Bill Russell, we decided to journey to Austin. We were to go with Bill, but he got sick so we went in without him. The cave is what is known as a crawlway cave. The entrance is small and it divides into two different smaller crawlways. They run into a slightly larger crawlway that has been mapped for 800' and is longer than that. This crawlway leads to a room christened Ginger, because that name is on the wall along with a paw print, probably cat print. From there Dan Watson, Brian, and myself went through a sideways crawl and it opened up more. Still crawlway though. Here passage started going off with one blocked with breakdown, but having a large amount of air blowing out. We were stopped here and had to turn back. The blocked crawlway certainly needed to be knocked out. We then returned to the entrance and back to San Marcos.



May 10, 1971
Place: Airmen's Cave
People: Robert Hemperly, Roy Jameson, Stan Moerbe, Dale Pate
Report by: Dale Pate

We wanted to go through the cave again and see if there was some way to get past the blocked crawlway with air blowing out. After we got through the crawlways to the back, we heard noises and voices. It was Bill Russell and Wes Loder and his wife. They were from the Balcones Grotto. They just happened to have a 5 lb hammer along with them. Roy and Wes got in the crawlway and started chipping. After about 15-20 minutes they hollered "We're through!" and we all went through to virgin passage. The cave continued to get larger past the crawlway. Some of the passage was 10' by 10'. This new part had maze-like crawls. An estimation of the length would put this cave at 2000' and still going.



Old Style Cable Ladder-Carlsbad

May 1971
Place: Ahuacat
People: Keith Heuss, Stan Moerbe, Dale Pate, Mike Walsh, Charlie Yates
Report by: Mike Walsh

Once again we crossed the border with little difficulty. This time the crossing was made at Matamoros, across from Brownsville. The trip to the cave area was rather uneventful. Our target area was the pass across from Sotanito de Ahuacatlan. While waiting for Terry Raines and his group to arrive we went to visit and photograph Cueva de Los Riscos and Cueva del Puente de Dios. The entire group except Charlie went on this excursion. Stan checked the small crawlway in Los Riscos. Needless to say, it went nowhere. Keith took a series of photographs in Puente de Dios. While there, Dale and Keith checked the large flowstone wall on the left side of the big room. Passages led in several directions but none went very far. We stopped at the pool just above the first large drop. Upon returning to Ahuacatlan we found that Terry and his group had still not arrived. Dale, Stan, and I started up the river bed toward the store that night. We camped that night in the ruins near the store. The next morning we hiked up to Sr. Ramirez's house to try to get a guide to the deep sotano that we had heard about. We tried several houses but were unable to find a guide. We then returned to the store. About half an hour later Charlie and Keith arrived. We all took the trail that goes up just behind the store. It was our intention to follow the ridge up the hill and through the pass. Charlie and I took a left turn. The others did not see us and went straight up the hill. Once Charlie and I reached the crest of the hill we waited for the others. As it later turned out, they went down the hill to the river and then back up the hill toward the green trees. From there they went over the hill and then through the village that Charlie and I spent the night in. Feeling that they were gone forever, we went through the pass. That night we were taken to two small pit entrances. Early the next morning a local took us to what he called Sotano de Coyote. After that we visited another small pit and then we went to a larger one. Our guide then took us to Cueva de la Mesa. He said that Cueva de Agua was only about thirty minutes away but we elected to return to the village. Since Stan had all of the rope we were not able to enter any of the pits here.

While we were in the hills looking for the pits, the other group passed through town. They took the valley that went to the left from the village. Charlie and decided to take the same trail. We must have just missed them by about an hour or so. We were taken to two small pits on the right hand side of the hill. We then followed the valley to where it dropped downward toward the river. At the small village there we decided to take the trail to the left and not to go to the river a thousand feet below. Dale, Stan, and Keith had taken the trail to the river. Charlie and I were first taken to Sotano de Canoas. I went into the cave and was followed by a local. It was basically one large room but had a passage leading downward. I followed it till it closed off. The Mexican came into the room and I circled around behind him. When I yelled, he jumped.

We were then taken to another pit nearby. It sounded fairly deep when we dropped rocks into it. On our way back to the village we were taken to Sotano de Rincon. This was the best one that we had visited. Its 10' by 8' entrance dropped free for an estimated 130'. You could see a large room about 150' long and 50' wide at the bottom. After we returned to the village we decided to go back to Ahuacatlan. We went down the mountain toward Ahuacatlan. Once we reached the river the hiking was easy. We ran into the other group about halfway to the highway. Our entire group came out at a small town about three miles up the highway from Ahuacatlan. The group retreated to Tampico to recover from our misadventure. We had not found the new 300 meter pit that was said to be near the village, but we did find enough pits to check into on the next trip. With Sotanito de Ahuacatlan in the area who knows?

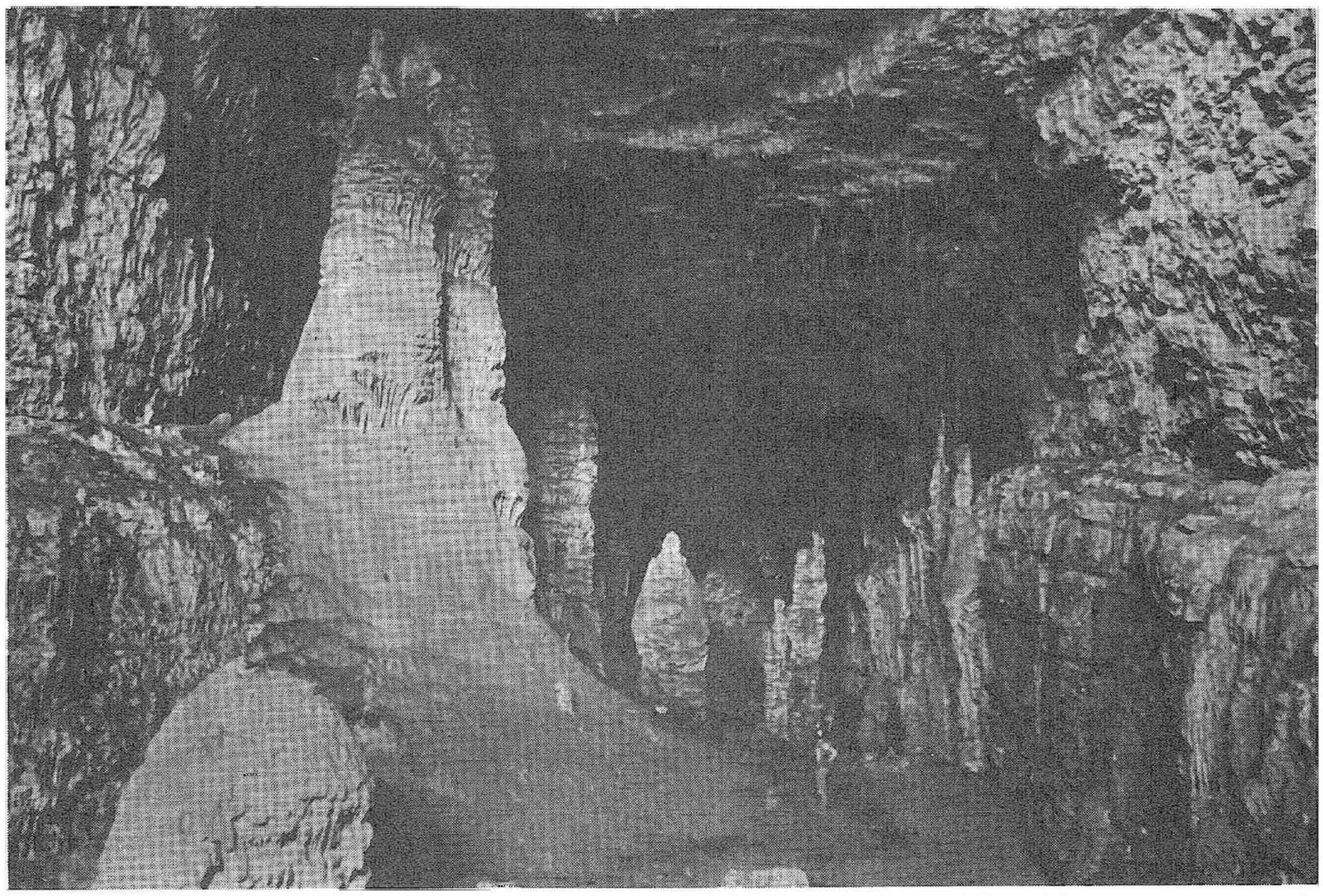
May 24-June 4, 1971
Place: Valles area
People: Craig Bittinger, Blake Harrison, Roy Jameson, Jan Lewis, Neal Morris
Report by: Blake Harrison

Roy, Jan, and myself left for Mexico planning to meet Craig and Neal at the Los Sabinos (AMCS) campgrounds. On the trip down we encountered major engine trouble in the states., but were able to fix it ourselves by Wednesday. Thursday we met Craig and Neal at the campgrounds along with cavers from Pan American College. Later that night we were awakened by a large crew from Texas Tech.. They had come to Valles on a biological trip. The next day our crew went to Monticellos to finish the map and check out several leads. The following day we headed west to Taninul #4 and other caves in the area such as Ventana Jalbali. That evening we returned to Sotanito de Montecillos to attempt connection in what had earlier been three different siphons. Two of these were passable and the third we make only verbal contact, due to lack of diving equipment. The next day we spent trying to find a shorter route to Sotano de Venadito. We were unsuccessful and had to hike the regular distance to the cave. Our intentions for the cave were to attempt finishing the map. When we reached the unmapped section we decided to explore in and map out. What we found was well over 3000' of virgin passage with most of it in water. We were all too tired to map and thus gave up on the idea. Our tired crew struggled back to the bus.

Our next plans were to map Puente de Dios near Jalpan. We spent one day doing this. The next day we used in bolting up a wall to check a promising lead in Puente de Dios and hiking to Cueva de Rio Jalpan. The following morning, after a nights rest, we proceeded to map ‘che cave. We mapped almost 8000’ of mostly walking passage. That evening we returned to the bus to camp. With almost a week of caving under our belts we agreed to return home. Once again we had car trouble. This time south of the border. We were able to get a tow to the states. We finally made it back safely.

July 23-25, 1971
Place: Huasteca Canyon, Cueva de la Boca
People: Linda Gardner, Keith Heuss, Dick Montgomery and girlfriend, Dale Pate, Mike Walsh
Report by: Dale Pate

The group picked me up about 2½ hours late at the Badger Burger and after a delay we started for Mexico. We drove to Reynosa where we crossed and late that night we camped outside of Monterrey. Early the next morning we drove into Monterrey to the Plaza where we shopped a little. Around 11:00 we started for Huasteca Canyon. We finally got into the canyon and we stopped at a mine entrance that ran into a cave that had a terrific wind blowing out. Before leaving here, three guys from the Rice Grotto came by on cycles and told us we wouldn't make it through the canyon since we were in a VW van. We told them we would go as far as possible and said goodbye. The road through the canyon was a rough one and we had to push the van in several places, but we finally made it through the canyon about 1 hour before dark. On the other side of the canyon we met the guys from Rice once more. They were amazed to see that we made it through and then invited us to stay with them where they camped. We agreed to, but first we drove down to the resturant-night club built close to Horsetail Falls. We then went back to the campsight and finally got to sleep. The next morning we left for Cueva de la Boca. We got to the cave and spent about 1-2 hours within the cave taking pictures and making a recording with a cassette recorder. After the cave, we went downstream and went swimming. We headed home after this, stopping shortly in Reynosa.



Cottonwood Cave, N. M.

September 3-6, 1971
Place: Sotano de San Francisco, Sotano de Los Lobos
People: Keith Heuss, Glenda Hinton, Sandi Luker, Dale Pate, Joe Simo, Mike Walsh
Report by: Dale Pate

Leaving San Marcos at about 7:30 Friday, we headed south for Laredo stopping briefly in a small town for Mike and a bite to eat. We arrived at the border at about midnight and this is where our troubles began* Our objective this trip was to visit La Puente and to take photographs and also to collect Biological specimens for Bill Elliott. At the border we were one group out of 200 or more wanting visas and car papers. Thanks to some cavers from Rice University being about two hours ahead of us in line, we got everything we needed by 5:30 that Saturday morning. After 5 1/2 hours we were anxious to leave so Mike started to drive. Unfortunately he put the wrong key in the ignition and got it stuck in the on position. The key wouldn't budge so we decided to push the van to get it started and we headed for San Luis Potosi. We stopped on the south side of Monterrey for breakfast and continued on. We made it to SLP and ate a delicious dinner at the Tokyo Restaurant. From there we headed east up into the mountains to San Francisco. We came to Valle de Los Fantasmas and stopped to look at the odd pinnicles of karst and the many sinkholes in the area. Continuing on we came to San Francisco, where we stopped and walked down to Sotano de San Francisco, which has about a 350′ drop to water. From there we drove to Los Lobos, where we once again got out and looked. Joe, Keith, and I carried a huge boulder to the entrance where we dropped (or rolled) it in. Unfortunately it shattered before it hit bottom. Los Lobos is a 620′ free fall drop. From there we drove on to a flat area where we decided to camp because it was getting late.

Keith and I slept in the van while the rest slept outside. Before everyone had gone to sleep we played ''The Storm" by the Mystic Moods on Keith's Cassette tape player. We shouldn't have done this. About 12:00 that night the storm hit. Rain poured down the rest of the night and didn't stop until we were out of the mountains. That night Glenda was the first to enter the van, then Mike, and then Joe. Sandi stayed outside for about 4 hours in the rain until Joe decided to see if she was still alive. She was, so he brought her back to the van. By morning there were five of us in the bottom of the van and Mike was in one cot.

If this wasn't enough, the next morning we couldn't push-start the van because the rain had made everything slippery. We tried pulling and pushing, but to no avail. Mike then decided to hike to town perhaps for help while Keith got started trying to figure out how to hotwire his van. Before he got it started he had his steering wheel and dash off and about 500 different wires going everywhere. He even had an extra left over when he was finished. About two hours after he had started, we were ready for travel. We decided not to continue to La Puente for two reasons: (1) because there was a river we would have to cross and (2) because the entrance to the cave has an arroyo 1 mile long and ⅝ mile wide emptying into the cave which was no doubt running at full force by now.

As we headed back to San Francisco we ran into Mike coming back with help. He got in and we continued on. We stopped at an old mine where we got some bricks, and found several old mining carts, both were too big and heavy to bring back. We finally got back on pavement and headed for SLP once again. We again stopped at the Tokyo Restaurant and then went shopping in the market for an hour. After getting on the road, we drove straight through to Nuevo Laredo.

September 11, 1971
Place g McCarty Cave
People? Keith Heuss, Jeri Jones, Sandi Luker, Debbie McCarty, Dale Pate, four new club members
Report by? Dale Pate

This was the first group of new members I led through the cave. This was the club to first trip of the semester and there were quite a few members who went through the cave. Dick Montgomery, and Logan Mcnatt also led a group through the same day. After trying to show everyone how to light their carbide lamps, we started through the cave. We took the group past the squeeze and beyond the Lily Pad Room into the Register Room. From there we went into the last room. After experiencing total darkness, we started out of the cave. When we made it out, we went and ate, then we all headed out to Five Mile Dam for a rope session.

September 12, 1971
Place? McCarty Cave
People: Doug Christie, Blake Harrison, Sandi Luker, Dottie Morris, Dale Pate, four new members
Report by? Dale Pate

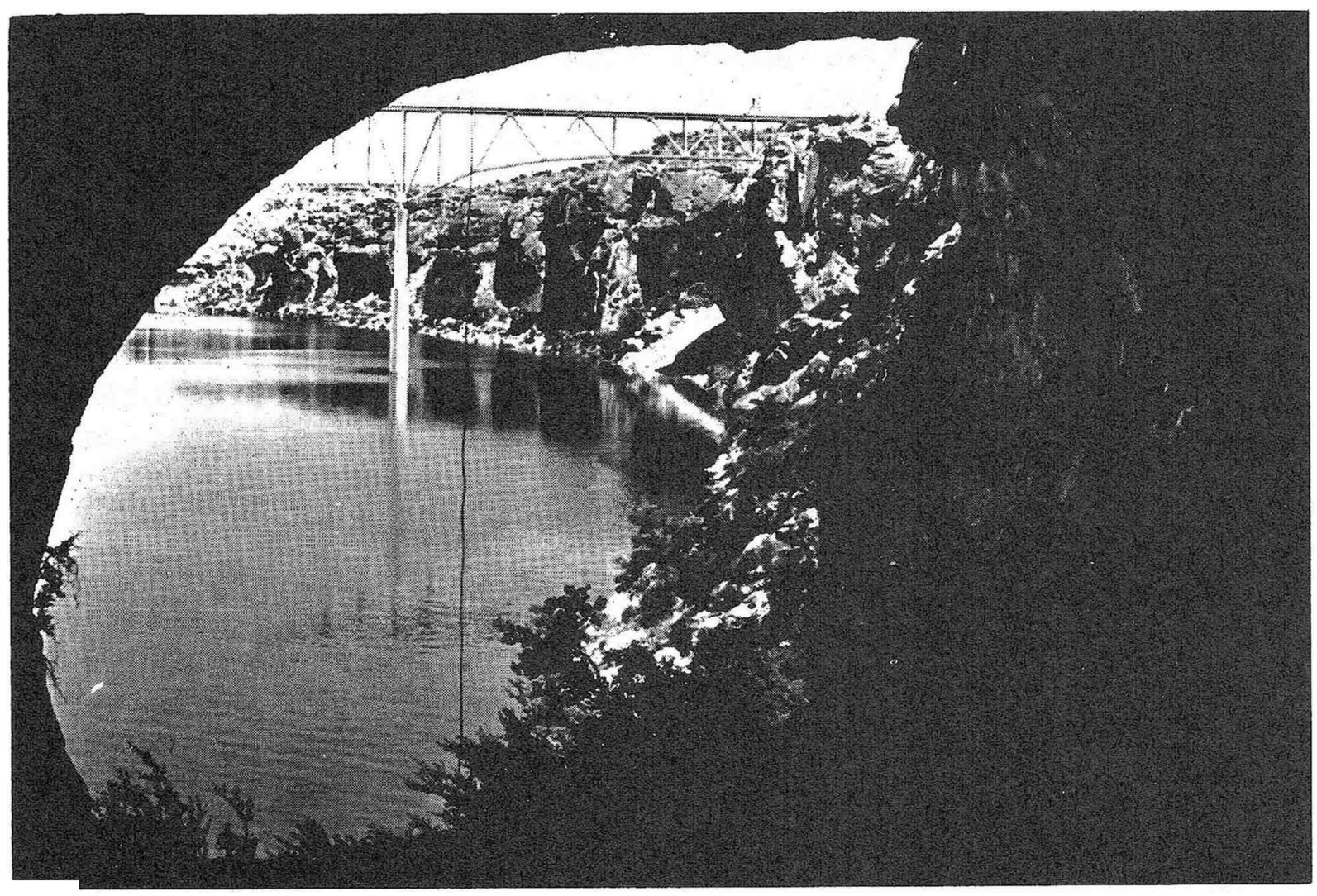
This was another trip for new members that didn't go through the cave the day before. We went through the same rigamarole with the lights and finally got into the cave. The new people were really interested in the cave. Blake, a new member, and myself went through the small crawlway leading out of the first room instead of going through the usual way. After leaving the cave we once again went to a rope session at Five Mile Dam where this time I used Prusik Loops to go up the cliff.

September 17-19, 1971
Places Punkin Cave, Deep Cave, Blowhole Cave
People: About thirty club members
Report by: Robert Hamperly

As the first club trip of the semester it was designed to teach basic caving and or climbing skills to new members« The modest 50′ in Punkin Cave allows novices the opportunity to learn vertical tech niques with a maximum amount of safety. Deep Cave and Blowhole were also visited.

October 1-3, 1971
Place: Emerald Sink, Langtry Lead
People: About twenty club members
Report by: Robert Hamperly

With an assortment of vehicals all crammed to capacity we left San Marcos at 5 o′clock. Some time that evening we rolled into the roadside park above the Pecos High Water Bridge. That morning we awoke to find ourselves perched precariously atop the 300′ canyon overlooking the Pecos River. Blake and I rappelled off the 200′ structure for practice. Blake walked out of the canyon while I climbed back up the rope. After fooling around there for a while we all headed out for Emerald Sink. After the group finished rappelling into and out of the pit we went to Langtry Lead. A small contingent of the braver members of our crew decided to investigate the infinite hazards of the low water crawl full of the fetid remains of partially decomposed goat bodies. We then hooked it for home puzzled by the fact that none of our more timid companions would sit by us.



Eagle Cave

October 10 , 19 71
Placet Classen's Corkscrew
People: Dana Atwood, Jeri Jones, Sandi Luker, Dale Pate, Mke Walsh
Report by: Dale Pate

Jeri and I had planned to go to BoyeWs this Sunday afternoon, but Mike and Sandi were going to Corkscrew so we decided that this would be a better cave to go to, so we did. We left in my car at around 1:00 and finally got to the cave near 2:00 We met some members of the Alamo Area Grotto there taking an Explorer Post through the cave Doug Knight is the only name I remember in the group. We rigged Mike's 150' rope to the entrance chimney which was about 40-60' and went down after all of the other group had gotten in. At the bottom of the chimney is a 10? drop which the other group had rigged a cable ladder to, so we used it. After the entrance chimney, there are large passageways along with several places to chimney down. After going through a couple of nice rooms, we came to a 20' drop which we rigged with the SWTG cable ladder It is an experience using it because it is actually easier going up than down it. After this drop there are two passages, one goes for a short distance before it siphons, the other went upward into a series of rooms and passages with very beautiful formations, even though there was a whole lot of mud in that part of the cave. At the end there is a mud crawlway which Jeri and I went up into a ways before I got grossed out and started out of. Coming out of the cave, the other group had taken their cable ladder out, so we used jumars to help us chimney the 10f at the bottom of the entrance chimney. We got out of the cave after dark and headed back to San Marcos for clean clothes and Marco?s for a pizza.

October 15-17, 1971
Place: H.T. Miers Cave, Litter Barrel Cave
People: Dana Atwood, Keith Heuss, Jeri Jones, Dale Pate.
Report by: Keith Heuss

We departed San Marcos Friday afternoon and arrived at the campsite near H.T .Miers Cave late that night. Early Saturday morning we entered the cave. Due to the lack of rope we turned back at the top of the 70' drop. We departed for Pecos High Water Bridge and arrived in time to walk down to the river level. Our intentions were to walk to Eagle Cave, the large shelter under the roadside park as seen from the bridge, but we were forced to hike up one of the canyons and return to the vehicle due to impending darkness. After a quick snack. Sunday morning we departed for Litter Barrel Cave. Due to lack of time we turned back at the beginning of the crawlway. LBC was relatively dry and some bats were observed in the second room.

October 20-25, 1971

Places Sotanito del Macho Rey, Sotano de la Selva,Sotano del Macho Rey

People: Blake Harrison, Mike Walsh

Report by: Mike Walsh

Finding ourselves out of work for several days, Blake and I took Blake's car to Laredo From there we took Mexican bus to Ciudad Valles. Due to the bus situation, we were forced to spend the night in the Hotel Jardin. A garden, it is not! We arrived in Ahuacatlan, Queretaro by bus the next day to find that a flood had swept through the town eight days earlier. Since we were planning on returning to Macho Rey, we carried more than nine hundred feet of rope up in the hills with us. Several hours later we arrived at the Sotanito del Macho Rey. In an attempt to connect this pit with Sotano del Macho Rey, we entered this pit. The cave ended in breakdown at the 350' level. After mapping this pit we finally go to rest. The following morning we carried the rope over to Sotano del Macho Rey. A small stream was flowing into the pit. After we learned that the locals had thrown a dead horse into the pit several days earlier, we decided not to enter. Our next objective was Sotano de la Selva. I had been taken to this pit in January but we were not able to enter it until this time. The entrance is about forty by fifty feet across. About sixty feet down this pit becomes almost perfectly circular. It is like this for most of the way to the bottom. From a ledge overhanging the pit it is a 403[1] free drop to the bottom. After mapping the pit, we made our way back to the states once again by Mexican bus.

October 31, 1971

Place: Airmen's Cave

People: Dana Atwood, Doug Christie, Steve Fleming, Jeri Jones, Dale Pate

Report by: Dale Pate

We left San Marcos at about 1:30 and headed for Austin and this crawlway cave. Subconsciously I knew I shouldn't be going back, but it*s a fine cave. We got to Austin and parked in the residential area at about 2:30, more or less. After taking everything out of the car, we walked down to the cave, where we met these strange guys. We lit up our carbide lights and headed in only to find that the combination on the lock had been changed. Very discouraged we tried various combinations to no avail, so Jeri and I bought some Dr. Pepper's and headed back to a phone to call Bill Russell. He promptly gave us the combination and we returned to the cave. We immediately opened the lock and started through the cave. By the time we got to Ginger, we were all pretty tired. After we got through the one-legged crawl we were really tired. We continued on to the "walking passage", stopped there to rest and re-carbide. Since it was getting late, we decided to head back so we got out as quick as possible because we also remembered that it was Halloween.

November 5 - 7, 1971
Place: Gruta del Palmito, Carrizal, Mexico
People: About twenty club members
Report by: Robert Hemperly

We left San Marcos at about 5 o'clock and arrived at Ojo de Agua "very late" according to reliable sources. The next morning we drove to the small town of Bustamante and paid the entrance fee of three pesos per person plus ten pesos for one hour of cave illumination. After a long upward hour of hiking, all of us managed to reach the entrance. An average of ten hours were spent in the cave and many pictures were taken. About ten of us witnessed the marvels of the new room. When we returned to camp we encountered a contingent of Mexican students on their way to the cave. After eating we drove to Carrizal and arrived at 10 o'clock that night, after a few wrong turns and the partial destruction of my Mustang. A cold front with rain moved in and we spent a miserable night trying to keep warm and sleep at the same time. The next morning we explored the cave relieved by its warmth (there is volcanic activity in the area and warm springs in the cave). At about three that afternoon we left for San Marcos.

November 16, 1971
Place: Fischer's Pit
People: Steve Alcorn, Keith Heuss, Karen Lamport, Gary Morrison Report by: Keith Heuss

Tuesday afternoon after classes Karen, Steve, Gary, and I drove out to visit the owner of the cave. He was very friendly but was con cerned about how long we would be in the cave. He warned us to be out of the cave before morning due to deer hunters on his property. Gary and Steve prussiked out as part of their qualification requirements. A quick drive back to San Marcos brought us brought us to the campus before the 11 P.M. curfew.

Bustamante, Nov. '71

November 24-29, 1971
Place: Cd. Valles, Mexico
People: Blake Harrison, Robert Hemperly, Keith Heuss, Jeri Jones, Karen Lamport, David Jackson, Sandi Luker, Stan Moerbe, Dale Pate, Mike Walsh
Report by: Blake Harrison

We left San Marcos in two VW buses and arrived in Cd. Valles in record time (for a,VW bus). It took us about 7 hours from the border. We met at the Hotel Covadonga, south of town. We were hoping to secure the use of a private plane there, but were out of luck at that time. There were several in the group that had not seen Cueva de Taninul #4, east of Valles, so we spent the afternoon visiting it and taking pictures there. We then drove to Xilitla after regrouping at Valles. We visited Cueva de Salitre, the large mouthed cave seen just below the town. It is quite an impressive, easily accessible Mexican cave. After this we drove to the Englishman's house west of the town and spent the night there. We had left Mike in Valles and he met us the next morning on the road. When we woke up the next morning we were fortunate enough to meet the owner of the strange Xilitla House, a very fine person. That day we split up with one group trying to get another airplane to fly over the Ayutla, Queretaro area, and another group visiting Huitzamoltitla and entering Sotano de San Antonio, a 386' pit near Xilitla. A third group looked for Cueva de Christian, located in Arroyo Seco. The next day after failing to get an airplane at the hotel again, our groups headed to Sotano de Venadito, north of Valles. We wanted to get in some vertical work and attempt to locate and possibly map a new section located earlier in the year by Terry Raines. After a 45 minute hike we were at the pit and soon had everyone in safely. Robert and I started looking for the room in the given area. After climbing and checking, Robert soon found exactly what we were looking for. It was quite an impressive room and had several leads in it. After checking the leads, we found that the room looped back over the main passage. We took some pictures and began the climb out. Our tired group headed back to the Los Sabinos campground. Robert and I were so tired that we missed the turnoff twice. We crashed at about 3 o'clock that morning. The next day we drove up the Micos road following Bill Russell and David McKenzie. We stopped and had a nice swim in the El Salto River. After this our groups split up. One went back via Valles and Brownsville and the other went back by way of San Luis Potosi and Laredo.

November 24-29, 1971
Places Sotano de Jineo(?), Sotano de El Molino
Peoples Roy Brown, Doug Christie, Jan Lewis, Logan McNatt, Terry Raines?
Peter Strickland
Report by: Doug Christie

After the usual hour or so of setbacks, Logan, Roy, Steve Fleming, Dick Davidson, Debbie McCarty, and I set out from Blake's house for Reynosa. We stopped in Seguin so that Dick could call his parents to inform them of his plans. Shocked that he would consider spending the Thanksgiving holiday, that great American tradition, in a foreign country, they informed him that he was not to go. Upon return to San Marcos, the party diminished to Logan, Roy, and myself, who set out for Laredo in Logan's car. Upon arriving in Laredo, we left the car with an old SWT caver friend of Logan's who happened by. We grabbed a bite to eat in Laredo and caught the southbound bus. Many hours later we arrived at the Gomez Farias cutoff and began to hike up to the town. Fortunately we were picked up after a short while by some sugar cane cutters. We found Terry, Jan, and Peter at about 7 o'clock. Pete was laid up from a confrontation with a Mala Mujer plant.

The next morning, Terry, Jan, Logan, Roy, and I entered Sotano de Jineo. It took us all day to get in and out. The following day, Peter joined us and Jan sat it out when we entered Sotano de El Molino. We mapped it to the end and decided to set out for Texas in order to rest before starting school again.

We arrived in Laredo just in time to catch the tail end of the Carrizal drama. We got back to Logan's late Sunday night, and, after persuading Roy that he should go to bed, got a good night's rest.

January 21-23, 1972
Place: Caverns of Sonora, Punkin Cave
People: Jim Haning, Keith Heuss, Mike Hill, Cindy Kam
Report by: Keith Heuss

We drove to Sonora and took the commercial tour of the Caverns there. I had my Speleological Survey of Edwards County along so we could check on some caves our club has never visited before. We decided to check on the area along highway 55 between Rocksprings and the roadside park where 55 intersects 277. We checked the first two roads to the right; one 6.5 miles and the other 11 miles from the roadside park towards Rocksprings. Some gates were locked and some owners were not at home. We decided to call ahead first next time we want to try caving in a new area*

Discouraged we drove to Rocksprings. We called Pat Black and drove to Carta Valley for the night. The next morning we did the drop in Punkin and returned to San Marcos.

January 23, 1972
Place: Fischer's Pit
People: Steve Alcorn, Gary Morrison, John Teates
Report by: John Teates

The trip to Fischer's Pit was mostly for qualification purposes. Steve and Gary, having completed their knot work, needed only to rig a pit and prussik out of it in order to complete the basic requirements for qualification. Upon arrival at the pit, both once again tied their knots for me. Steve rigged the pit and descended first. After reaching the bottom, the rope was pulled out, untied, removed from the tree completely, and was then re-rigged by Gary, who then descended. I was last to enter the pit. After spending a few minutes on the bottom chasing frogs and getting a free shower, Steve tied his prussik knots and began to ascend the rope. Gary was next to prussik out followed by myself. The trip went smoothly except for the water flowing from the first level to the second causing the rope to become wet and making prussiking difficult. After climbing out of the pit, both demonstrated their ability to coil the rope. The trip was wet but good. All returned back safely.

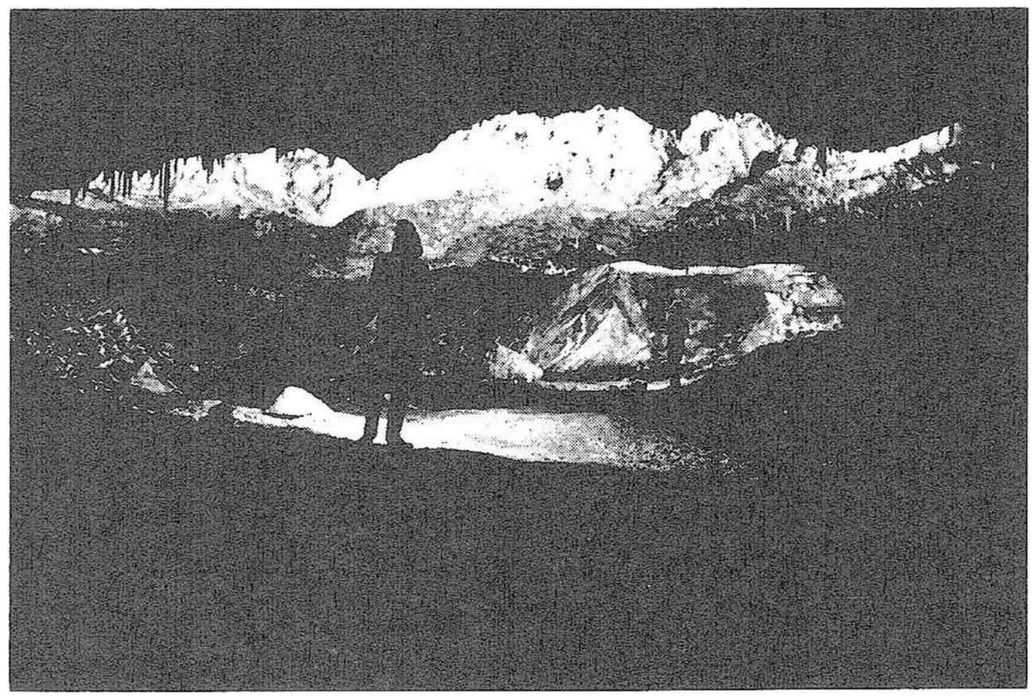
January 26-31, 1972
Place: El Sotano, Mexico
People: Donna Atkins, Frank Binney, Craig Bittinger, Steve Bittinger, John Fish, Blake Harrison, David Honea, Roy Jamison, Jan Lewis, Logan McNatt, Terry Raines, Craig Sainsott, Peter Strickland, Tom Wright
Report by: Blake Harrison

Since this trip report is covered in detail by the AMCS in a special report, I won't go into detail here. After Logan and Craig B. returned to Austin with the news of a BIG pit, it took only two days to get a crew of 14 cavers to head to Mexico. Two cars left Tuesday the 25th and arrived at Ayutla the 26th. The other vehicle arrived the morning of the 27th. That day we hiked to Rancho El Barro and camped in the schoolhouse The next day we hiked to the pit and began rigging it. Some of our members entered the pit and some camped in it that night. The next day we completed the survey around the top of the pit and the rest of the crew entered the pit. We completed the survey inside the pit and then started the climb out. The pit measured 1400* by 700′ at the top and 700′ by 350′ at the bottom. It is over 1400′ deep but our rigging point produced a rappel of only 1345′. The hike to the pit takes approximately 9 hours of steady trucking. The return hike takes just as long*. After a short rest the group returned home to give the news to the world.

February 12, 1972
Places ClasserPs Corkscrew
Peoples Roy Brown, Gary Morrison, Ross McAlpine, John Teates,
Bob Zwodney
Report by: John Teates

Leaving San Marcos Saturday morning, the five of us piled into Ross9 s Mustang and headed to New Braunfels. Upon arrivalf I was chosen to do the talking. Managing to convince the owner that we were capable cavers became quite a problem. Only after I showed him my club membership, my NSS card and my Red Cross card did he grant permission.

Classen9s Corkscrew is a little mexican cave in Texas* In order to enter the cave one must chimney down 30% Immediately the cave opens into large walking passage. There are leads that go up, to either side, down, and straight ahead. Several small pools of water dot the floor. Going on we encountered a room where soda straws, bacon rind, flowstone, and stalagtites predominate. Two inch high plant seedlings were observed growing out of the mud on the flowstone. After avoiding several small pockets of water we rigged a rope and descended approximately 30% The ledge we landed upon proved to be only the beginning of a muddy cave trip. Hurdling a small pit, which incidently leads to water, we entered the halls of mud! The halls meandered but eventually ended and curved back to the beginning. At one point, Roy Brown began calling for help. The four of us rushed to his rescue. Gary was first to enter a small mud slide leading to the small room. Upon entering he was immediately hit with a special deluxe, hand-made Roy Brown mud pie. Ross and Bob entered and were greeted in the same manner. I was told to stay out. Looking down the slide I could see four unknowns standing knee deep in wet watery mud. After the small welcoming party, Ross had to be guided out for not only was he unable to see, but his lamp quit. Returning back over the small pit, we ascended the rope and round a pool of water for Ross to wash in. Being covered with mud made chimneying difficult, but we managed to make it out by late afternoon. After checking in with the owner, we headed back to the car where we stripped ourselves of our muddy garments and headed home to San Marcos. The cave is definately worth seeing and returning to.



Cottonwood Cave? N_o M_e

February 12-13, 1972
Place: Fischer's Pit, Boyett's Cave, Gorman Falls Cave, Gormanette Waterfall Cave
People: Keith Heuss, Sand! Luker, Stan Moerbe
Report by: Keith Heuss

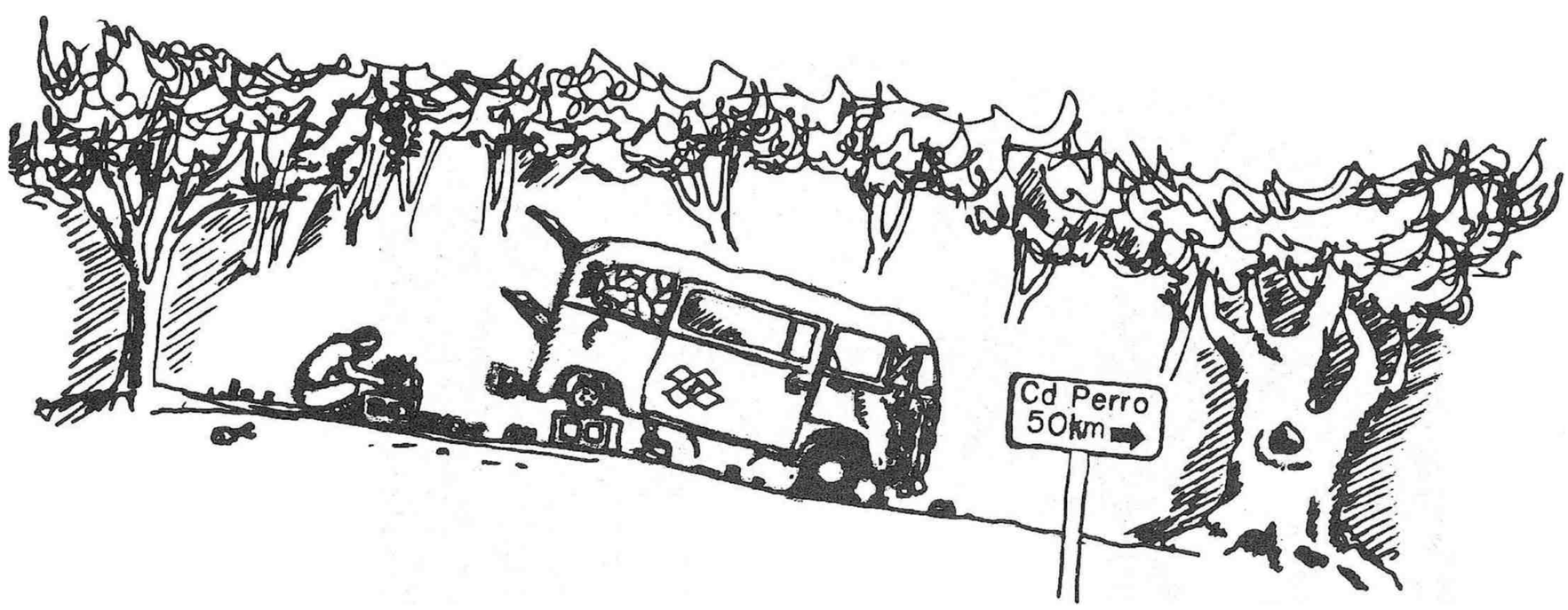
The weekend started out as a non-caving one* By Saturday afternoon the day had turned out to be such a beautiful one we couldn't pass up a chance to get out so we started talking about caving. It wasn't long till we were packing our gear. We decided on two local caves; Fischer's Pit and Boyett's Cave, both just out of San Marcos. I shot some movie film at the entrance to Fischer's and along the trail back from the pit. A soundtrack was recorded on a portable recorder.

From Fischer's Pit we drove to Boyett's Cave. We chimneyed in and explored most of the larger passages. The lake room was down about three feet from the water marks on the wall. While returning from Boyett's we decided to go to Gorman Falls Cave.

We spent Saturday night at the campgrounds near the cave. Sunday morning we chimeyed down the cliffs near the falls and entered Gormanette Waterfall Cave. This small but interesting cave which is formed entirely of travertine has three entrances along the bank of the Colorado River. Since the cave is not too well known and is a bit difficult to reach it has received little vandalism.

We proceeded from this cave and went to Gorman Falls Cave. The air was good all the way to the end of the cave. On our way out of the cave we passed three groups of ''flashlight cavers". Since the cave is so well known and visited mostly by non-cavers, it is well vandalized.

By now we were thoroughly covered with mud so we headed back to San Marcos • On the way back we noticed the old suspention bridge across the Colorado River at the town of Bend has been completely destroyed. We made a quick stop at Nix Cemetery to look at old tombstones.



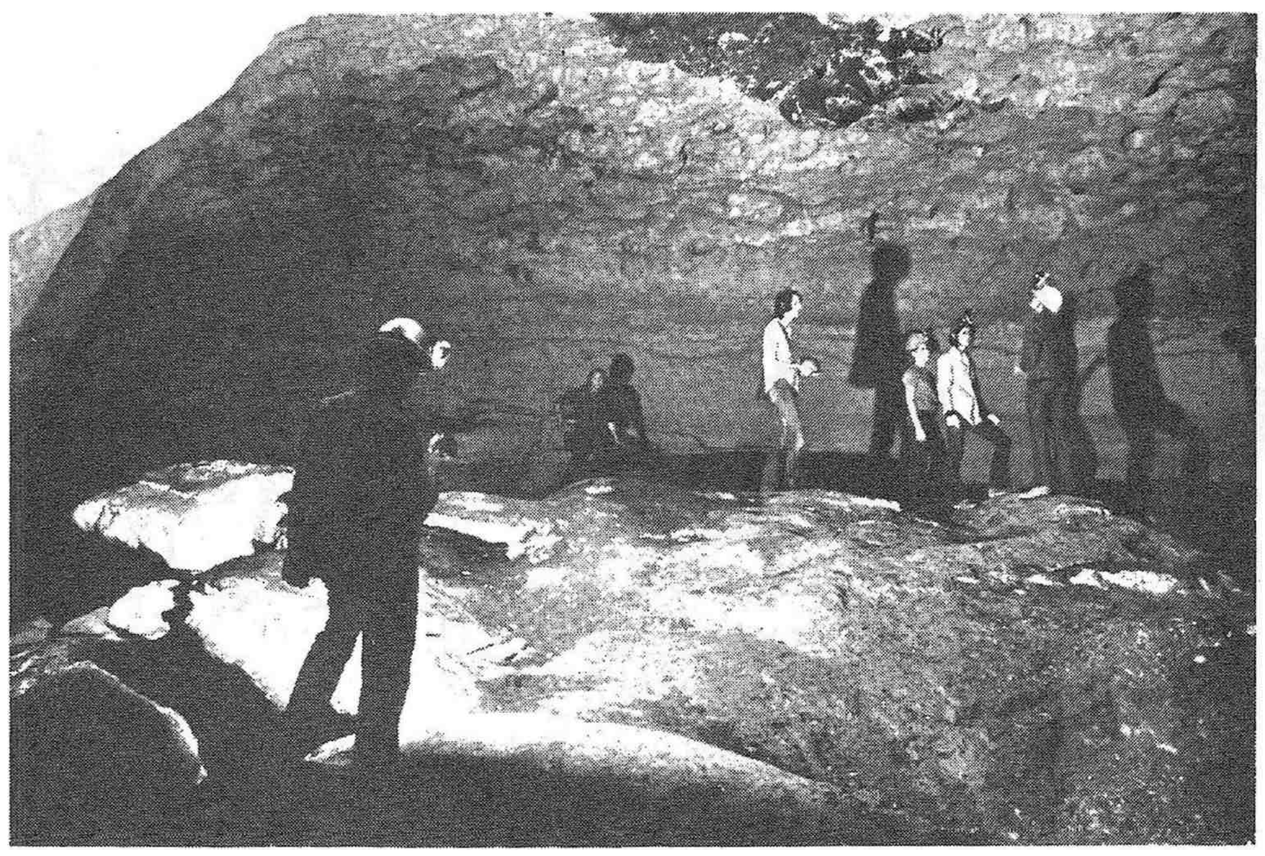
"Blake and his faithful van."

February 18-20, 1972
Place: Dunbar, Punkin, Wyatt Caves
People: SWTG, and others
Report by: John Teates

The first club trip of the year began at San Marcos between the hours of 1:00 and 6:00 PM. Everyone met at the roadside park near Rocksprings, Texas. After a cold windy night everyone took to the road for Dunbar Cave. Once underground, the cave went off into two directions. The cave is approsimately 1500s long with 35*-40. diameter walking passage. A significant feature of the cave is its cave swallows. Of particular interest is their ability to maneuver in the dark. Several of them followed us to the back of the cave, where we proceeded to catch one. After spending a few hours looking and taking pictures we all left for Punkin. The purpose of doing Punkin was to use time since we were not suppose to arrive at the Turney Freiss Ranch until Saturday evening. Cindy Kam prussicked while those who went down mainly bounced the pit.

Toward evening we all headed toward Sonora, Texas to Freiss Ranch. After missing turns, and getting lost myself, a U.T. caver took off across a dirt road on a motorcycle. Within minutes we found Mike Walsh who was already at the cabin waiting for us. Mr. Freiss had allowed us to sleep in his hunting cabin with bunks, running water, a stove and heat.

Sunday morning we were guided to Wyatt Cave. The cave has a small breakdown entrance. There is quite a bit of walking passage, some medium size rooms, and many leads toward the back of the cave. To get to the back, there is a narrow walking passage in some breakdown. Then under a low ceiling to another room. Off to one side there is a passage. To the other, a room with formations worth taking pictures. The cave is not big but interesting and was a different cave for the club trip. Also two smaller caves were checked on the same ranch, but were insignificant aside from the rattlesnake on one. By late afternoon all were heading back to San Marcos.



Dunbar Cave

March 10-14, 1972
Place: New Mexico; Carlsbad Cavern, Cottonwood and Hidden Cave
People: Keith Heuss, Richard Montgomery, Ray Morales, Bill Eneks, John Teates
Report by: John Teates

This trip was significant in that it marked the first time a group from SWTG ever did the New Mexico Cave System. We left San Antonio on Sunday night and arrived in New Mexico on Monday morning. We were not to meet the person who was to furnish us the keys to the caves until Monday evening so we decided to take a picture taking tour of Carlsbad Cavern. After several hours of photographing we got our keys and headed to Guadalupe National Forest. Missing our turn, we ended up in the forest with Keith's bus. After spending the night we backtracked Tuesday morning. By noon, and almost losing the VW bus up a narrow mountain side road (or trail) plus all the rocks you could eat, we arrived at our destination- Dark Canyon. WE set up camp and immediately searched for Cottonwood Cave. Upon finding it we prepared to enter.

Cottonwood is a large volumenous cave. The entrance is about 120' wide and 60' high. Once inside the cave becomes larger. Passageway is approximately 150' wide and the ceiling is about 100[1] high. Large columns 6-10' thick are found throughout. The main passage is about 1000' long. Beyond the breakdown in the back is a steel gate that leads to more cave. At the time we were there the key was forgotten back at camp, so no one went beyond the gate. After spending several hours picture taking we emerged out and returned to camp.

Wednesday morning all of us began, what turned out to be a little more than three hours worth of hiking to look for Hidden Cave. There are two entrances, one through a steel gate and the other a fifty foot rappel. All of us first entered through the gate. Crawling down a rickity ladder, one is immediately impressed. The first room is filled with stalactites and helictites. Beyond here there are two walking passage ways that lead to the same room. Other than one fried egg, the majority of the beauty is found in the first room. After spending a couple of hours in this section we left and went over to the rappel. I went down first, followed by Keith and Bill. Richard and Roy remained topside. This part was by far the most exciting section. Once again we encountered large walking passage, very large columns, a travertine dam over twenty feet long and in some places at least 12" high, 6' deep rimstone pools, lots of leads and very impressive hallways. This section turned out to be the most exciting part of the trip. At the end of about three hours we emerged. After reuniting with Richard and Roy they said they tried to find Deep Cave but were unable to. We then took a vote and decided to break camp and return to Texas. By late afternoon we were out of Guadalupe Forest and going home. We arrived in San Antonio 4:00 AM Thursday morning.

The trip was definitely worth it. The caves are much more than what I could possibly describe. Our only regret is that there was too much beauty and not enough ways to capture it on film.

March 12-15? 1972
Place: Sotano de las Golondrinas
People? Doug Christie? Steve Fleming? Robert Hemperly
Report by: Robert Hemperly

We left San Marcos and arrived in Aquismon at 7AM with no problems. We got 2 hours of sleep on the side of the road despite a small cattle stampede over our bodies. Got permission from the jefe at 9 o'clock. 30 minutes up the side of the mountain we found that we made poor burros This was not surprising seeing as how we were each carrying an average of 65 pounds of gear each. Steve finally conked out complaining about severe stomach cramps and mumbling something about a peanut butter sandwich while he was wretching in the bushes. The decision was made to leave Steve with our packs and the rope with instructions to secure a burro and driver. Doug and I continued on up to Tamapatz and arrived there only 4 hours later. We were told that the Presidente had gone to Aquismon much to our discouragement. We continued to the pit from here and reached it before sundown. The swallows had just begun to return to the sotano. It was a beautiful sight. They would circle above in formation for about *2* passes and then all at once? as if by signal[9] a group of them would detach themselves and dive into the pit at full speed. The wind would cause their wing feathers to resonate with a weird whizzing sound as they went passed our vantage point into the black depths below. Their thousands of high-pitched chirps were non the less overshadowed by the harsh calls of the parrots. These beautiful[9] brilliant green birds would enter the pit in a slow spiral instead of the power dives of the swallows. We couldn't understand how they managed to keep from colliding with one another. When the show was over we sat down to ponder our fate. It was 7 o'clock? we were hungry? it was getting darker and colder by the minute? and the mist had begun to crawl out of the valley below. By 8 o'clock we were wondering if Steve would ever show up so we began to look for a place to sleep and keep warm and dry like down in a karst crack. Finally we heard Steve down below in the dark. Oztotl had spared us once again. After gorging ourselves on. all available food we crashed-with the cold mist9 my tent was a lifesaver.

The next morning both Steve and Doug were feeling poorly and wanted to return early. Instructions had been left with the burro driver to return -at 1 o'clock that day. The pit was rigged by 9 o'clock. Three ropes were used? a 600' samson? a 300' bluewater II? and a 360[8] bluewater II. I entered and went down to the end of the 300 to the first knot. It was here that I discovered that I was not sufficiently skilled to re-rig my rappel rack with any degree of safety. Upon further rationalization? I felt it would be impossible for all three of us to bounce the pit? de-rig the ropes? and be ready to go by 1 o'clock. Then I tried to think of all the positive arguements for continueing downward. I took a vote hanging there some 900' above the floor and it passed by acclaimation? I began to climb out.

After getting down the mountain? I tried to convince Steve and Doug to stay in Mexico a few more days but to no avail. They were adament in their demand for an immediate withdrawal. We drove back 14 hours without stopping. After that hike down? it took toothpicks to hold our eyes open. I would have deemed it justifiable homicide if I had strangled them both. Bad trip? nice pit? 'nuf said.

March 24-26, 1972
Place: Montgomery Cave, Airport Cave, Carcass Cave
People: Steve Fleming, Keith Heuss, Jeri Jones, Mike Walsh, Dale Pate, Larry Williams
Report by: Dale Pate

Keith, Jeri, Steve, and I left San Marcos at about 5:30 and got to Mike's apartment in San Antonio where we all switched to Mike's car. Kind of cramped, we drove to Pearsall where we met Linda and got into his new van. From Pearsall, we drove to the Pecos Bridge where we camped for the night. The next day we met Larry Williams in Langtry at 8:30. Larry is from Sul Ross. That morning Mike and Larry tried to find various people who owned caves and we finally got two guys to take us to a cave located 5 or 6 miles past Langtry Lead and Emerald Sink. The cave turned out to be a fissure cave about 200' long with five entrances along the cliff. We named it Carcass Cave because of a dead sheep in the entrance. After coming out, we hiked down to the the Pecos River and hiked around for a while. Mike and Larry found a small cave with one bat in it, so they named it Pecos River Bat cave.

We drove back to Langtry and then headed for Montgomery Cave and Pumpville. At Pumpville, we talked to a Border Patrol guy and he told us about some caves. We drove to a Mr. Harrison's ranch and he took us out to Montgomery Cave. We drove him back and decided we would look up a few more people before going in the cave. We finally got to the cave when it was starting to get dark. The sunset along with several thunderstorms were really nice on the desert. We finally got into the cave. We used a rope ladder on the first drop which was about 20-25'. We rappeled down the second drop of 30' and the next which was about 40' on the same rope. The last drop was about 90-100'. This led to walking passage. The walls at this lower level were totally coated with gypsum, which many beautiful gypsum flowers grew out of. The passageway was 300' long and Keith and Steve got some nice slides. I was last up the last drop, while Keith was last up the next drop. I was last out of the cave though because we pulled out a lot of wire that the owner's kid had gone into the cave on. There was about 50' of cable.

We then drove to Pumpville where we spent the night. The next morning we drove to Comstock where we found out about a cave some people had drilled into while digging a cess-pool. The cave turned out to be very small. We then drove out to get permission to go to Airport Cave. We got to the cave and the entrance sink, which is rather impressive, but had a lot of old wire and metal junk in it though. The passageway was much like that of Litter Barrel Cave. We came out of the cave and drove to Comstock. We let Larry off at his car there and headed for San Marcos.

14-16, 1972
Carlsbad, New Mexico
People: Jim Haning, Robert Hemperly, Keith Heuss, Sandi Luker, Stan Moerbe, Donald Spear
Report by: Robert Hemperly

All six of us left San Marcos at 2:30 PM on Friday afternoon. We reached Carlsbad at 1:00 AM and went to Andy Komensky's house to obtain the keys for Cottonwood Cave. From his house we drove to Lincoln National Forest and then drove and pushed our way to the entrance of the cave. Due to the cold weather, we decided to crash inside the cave. Stan woke us up at 7:00 Saturday morning and we began to explore the cave. Keith took alot of pictures of the gypsum formations. On our way out we met the resident Cave Specialist of the Forest. In spite of the great amount of cave and speleothems we had seen, he told us that 95% of them had been destroyed by tourists (among them, NSS "cavers" of the last convention there). Cottonwood will be closed to all but scientific and mapping crews for about a year to allow the gypsum to regrow at its rate of 14" per year. From Cottonwood Cave we drove to the campsite above Hidden Cave. We spent an estimated five hours hiking through Cave Canyon looking for Black Cave, but we never found it. That evening we hiked down to Hidden Cave and rappelled into the 30' skylight. We were prepared to stay the night, so with all our gear, this was the easiest of the two entrances. The immense flowstone formations and the total absence of breakdown were pretty impressive. It would have been a nice stay if some people hadn't decided to have a campfire and keep it going all night. It was a very smoky experience and left us grossed out. We climbed out early the next morning and headed home for Texas, but not forgetting the beauty and grandeur of the New Mexican caves.

April 28-29, 1972
Place: Devil's Sinkhole
People; Bill Eneks, Richard Montgomery, John Teates, Philip White
Report by: John Teates

After spending the night at the road triangle near Rocksprings we proceeded to the Ranch. Following a lengthy discussion of the recent accident and showing our equipment and explaining what we planned to do, we were given directions.

After rigging, I went down first, followed by Richard and Bill. Philip being a non-caver stayed on top. Sinkhole's size is not apparent until after going over the lip. The inside contains a massive breakdown mound. Some evidence still remains from earlier guano mining. We then proceeded to the bottom of the breakdown circled it taking pictures, and explored. Because it threatened to rain we chose not to stay down too long. The sinkhole is very large on the inside. The entrance is about 50 yards wide. Insid it is about 2-3 acres in width. The drop is from 130-150' depending on where one lands. We spent about four hours then ascended and left. The pit is a good rappelling pit to learn rope safety.

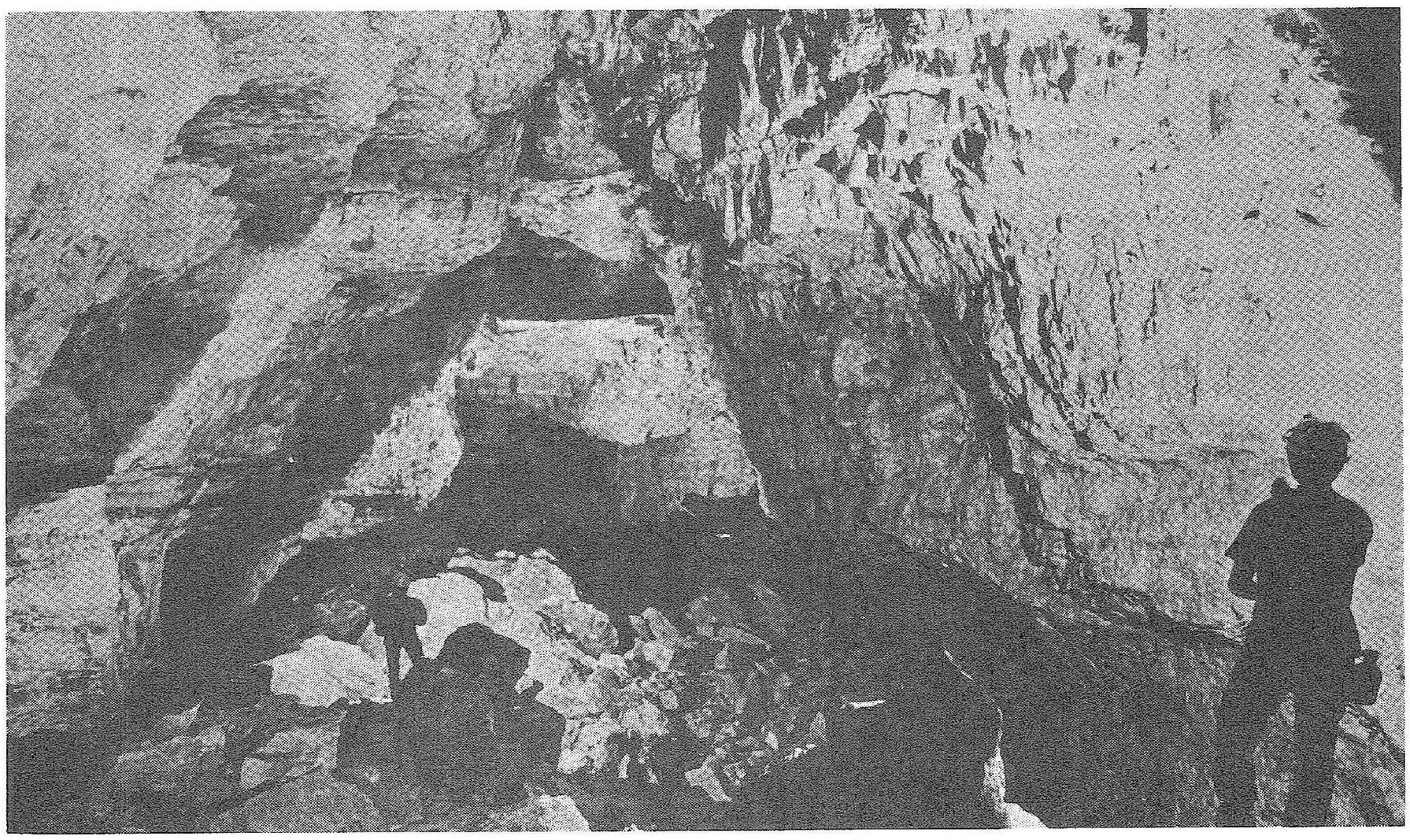
May 13-June 3, 1972
Place: Mexico
People: Blake Harrison, Robert Hemperly, Stan Moerbe
Report by: Robert Hemperly

Stricken by a severe case of cave itch, I contacted Stan and we planned a trip to Mexico. I took my mustang, picked up Stan in Bishop, Texas and we drove to Reynosa. Our first stop was at Gomez Farias, wher we hiked around and looked at three pits. From here we drove to Los Sabinos to look for other cavers, then on to the Condesa in Valles for a quick melanesa. We read a note from Frank, saying that he, Barb, and Walt were in Ahuacatlan. From here we took the Xilitla cutoff to look for the Cave of the Christian. We ended up walking an estimated 1000' to the bottom of Arroyo Seco, but no cave. The river down there is beautiful.

When we got back to the car we drove to the house of Xilitla and then on to Sotano de Tlamaya. We rigged the pit and rappelled down to the 279' level. Stanley found a live snake among the rocks. I had brought another section of rope down for the next drop, but there was too much water coming in and we were already too cold and soaked to continue. We climbed out and drove back down the road to Huitzmolotitla It rained enough that night to make the floor of my tent feel like a water bed with holes. No sleep. The next day we spent a few hours hiking around the pit and down the waterfall which enters it. Unfortunately we didn't have enough rope to do it. We slept in a stable on the side of the road. From there we drove from Xilitla to Ahuacatlan looking for Frank, Barb, and Walt. No luck. We drove back to Puente de Dios. We hiked down the riverbed and went through the cave and on the way back we cooked at Los Riscos. We then tried hiking around to see Rio Jalpan, but were unable to reach it. When we reached my car we found a note from Frank and quickly returned to Valles. Ah, Valles! A house to stay out of the weather, a shower- all the comforts of home. From here we were invited to accompany them on some of the many tours to some of the caves in the area. Tinaja, Japones, the Rio Choy. One day we split up- Stan went to La Florida, north of Ayutla with Craig Bittinger and John Greer to check out leads, while I went to Soyate. The big day for the La Cieniga came and Stan, who didn't have time, stayed in Valles, did Arroyo and went home. Then Blake, of all people, showed up and we were off to Ahuacatlan. Blake and I left ahead of the others. He showed me the Sotanito and told me many tales of bravery in its discovery and exploration. After a full 8 hours of hiking, we reached La Cieniga and everyone did some heavy sleeping. In all, there were about 20 cavers there, plenty of pits and much caving was done. Blake and I had to leave early and John Mikels accompanied us down the mountain and out of the valley by way of the canyon route to Ayutla. I got very sick, so the going was slow. At Ayutla we got a ride back to Ahuacatlan. We drove to

June 20-21, 1972
Place: Red Arrow Cave, Roadcut caves-Leakey
People: Jeri Jones, Steve Fleming, Dale Pate
Report by: Dale Pate

We left here (San Marcos) around 7:30 and arrived in Gamer and camped there for the night. We tried to find the owner of Wilson[1]s Cave, but he wasn't home. On the road east of Leakey they had just finished paving the road and the blasting opened up four new caves. The first one we stopped at, we named Jeri's Crystal Cave. It was kind of small, but very pretty and it also had a lead going off with formations blocking the way. The next we visited was named Dale's Lakeroom Cave. This was larger and it had a lake room and some fo mations. The next cave was named Steve's Spider Cave. It was abo 15[0] long and had quite a few spiders in it. The last was named Steve's Formation Cave and we decided to go to Red Arrow Cave. We drove to Camp Wood and between there and the Rocksprings road we went into a roadcut cave. The name was Vance Cave. We arrived at the Rock Eagle Ranch and got permission to enter Red Arrow Cave. We drove to what we thought was the right hill and searched for well over an hour for the cave. After that we drove to the next hill and found the cave in five minutes. We were already tired and the temperature was over 100, but we started into the cave. At the entrance we encountered about 6,000,000 gnats which drove me crazy and then after we got a little ways into the cave we heard a roaring$ flapping noise. All the bats had decided to come visit us and eat the gnats at the same time. Not wishing to upset the many bats we decided we would wait until winter to explore the and then left. Several Indian artifacts were found near the entrance to Red Arrow. One was 1/2 of a large spear-head. The way back to the main road was rocky and bumpy, but we made it and continued on to San Marcos.



Cottonwood Cave, N. M.

July 1-2, 1972
Place: River Styx
People: Larry Armstrong, Matt Farrar, Steve Fleming, Stan Moerbe, John Graves, Mike Walsh
Report by: Steve Fleming

Leaving Friday night, we arrived at Mike's parents house about midnight. Next morning we drove the remaining 160 kilometers to the cave. After a cold, wet trip and a few minutes spent digging out way of a different entrance we drove back to Clyde instead of camping near Guthrie.

July 8-9, 1972
Place: Pozo De Gavilan
People: Glenn Darilek, Matt and Susie Farrar, Steve Fleming, John Graves, Scott Hardin, Wayne Russel
Report by: Steve Fleming

We all headed for Pozo de Gavilan and were impressed with the pit. Rigging our Blue Water we rappeled 87 meters of which 61 meters is free. At the bottom is a large lake into which we launched a raft to check the part which went back under the cliff. On the way back to the United States Matt wrecked his new 4-wd when he hit a VW bus in the mountains. Nobody was hurt but Matt was fined 200 pesos at the Jefe's office in Linares. With no more incidents we rolled into San Antonio at 2:00 AM Monday morning.

August 5-6, 1972
Place: Huasteca Canyon
People: Glenn Darilek, Steve Fleming, Scott Hardin, Tom Stattler
Report by: Steve Fleming

Three AAC members and myself made the trip to Huasteca mainly because we had not been there before. We made fast trips through the north and south San Bartolo caves and then went the turista route for Horsetail Falls and Grutas de Villa Garcia before going through Cueva de la Boca. We were very much impressed with the size of la Boca. There is a possible lead in Huasteca directly across the canyon from the San Bartolo caves but as of now it has not been checked.

August 5-28, 1972
Placet NSS Convention, White Salmon, Washington
Peoples Blake Harrison, Dottie Morris, Robert Hemperly, Doug Sumbera, Calvin Walker
Report by§ Blake Harrison

We left late Saturday night and drove all night heading West. The first part of this trip was not exactly a caving trip, so I won't expound on it. We mainly spent the week traveling at our own leisure and seeing some of the sights on the way up there. We stopped at the Royal Gorge, the Grand Tetons, Yellowstone, and just a few other places of interest.

At one point near Kooskia, Idaho, we gtopped to move a burning log from the road that was obstructing the traffic. While three of us got out to move the log, the other three were waiting in the bus. Out of nowhere there came this explosion and glass flying all over the bus. I Immediately noticed that nobody was hurt and hopped out of the bus to see exactly what had happened. To my astonishment, from the cliff directly above, a 250 lb. rock had fallen and struck my bus. We surveyed the damage and cleared the the accident with the local sheriff. Basically the damage amounted to a ripped door that wouldn^et shut within 6 inches, a damaged right turn signal, a broken vent window and a hurt W. We proceeded on to the convention site.

Once at the convention, we checked in with the other and headed on to Vancouver, Canada. Our excursion to Canada only lasted two days, but we did get to enter Canada and see some fine country on the way. After an uneventful trip back to the convention,we were ready for the convention activities to start. There are a lot of things to do at conventions, and we did as many as possible. Among these were caving in some of the lava tubes in the area, speleo-Olympics, caving in the ice caves, speleo-rallies, swimming in the local 50 degrees water, and other things. Visiting other cavers at night was a favorite pastime for the group of cavers from Texas.

Finally after a week of activities, ect., it was time to return. Since most of my riders that had come with me had gone, I had to get some more. This was not very hard to do, and I soon had a full car load. We headed south and by the time we reached Yosemite National Park, there were only two riders left. Frank Binney and I were the only two. We stopped off in Los Angeles for a few days of leisure and to check on a cave movie that he and some of his friends were making. We made a quick stop by Disney land and then drove on back to Austin, where my bus (as usual) cracked a ring and was VERY sick.

and that was it.

August 12-13^ 1972
Place: Aramberri^ Hidalgo? Iturbide
Peopler Glenn Darilek? Steve Fleming? Mike Walsh
Report by: Steve Fleming

The purpose of this trip was to check three "turista" caves which Walsh had previously learned about. As it turned out? none were for "turista" types. The cave at Hidalgo proved to be a one room affair with a diameter of approximately 8 meters and a height of 3 meters. Heading for Iturbide we checked the largest of three. The cave is about 6 kilometers from the town and is a scenic hike through a large pine forest. Passage is horizontal and runs for approximately 200 meters and contains a small colony of vampire bats. The last cave was at Aramberri, a small town 240 kilometers north of SLP, and consisted of one big room about 25 meters in diameter and 8 meters high. Each of these caves need mapping and a trip will soon be made to accomplish this.

September 1, 1972
Place: Elm Spring Cave
People: Steve Fleming and Sandi Luker
Report by: Steve Fleming

We went to San Antonio to finish mapping this cave and to see if the air was still bad on the lower levels. After mapping about an hour we rigged the 26 meter drop and rappeled 13 meters to a small ledge where we again checked the air. 'It was still good so Sandi elected to bounce bottom since she had never been in the cave before. At the bottom of the drop Sandi reported that the air quality was very low so we immediately climbed out. From past experience we decided that there is bad air at varying levels in the cave throughout the summer months.

September 2-4 9 1972
Place: Matehuala and Real de Catorce, SLP
People: Steve Fleming, Keith Heuss, Tom Stettler, Mike Walsh
Report by: Steve Fleming

Heading for Matehuala for the Labor Day weekend we went through Reynosa with no trouble. Checked and mapped two caves, one at Real de Catorce and went under the mountain to exit at an upper entrance. Also had several mine shafts intersecting from above from the Santa Anna Mine in which we descended 108 meters on wooden ladders to check some small domes opened by blasting. Went up to the town and took a few pictures. Returned to Matehuala we mapped about 210 meters of an estimated kilometer of passage. It has several connecting gypsum sinks from which a small stream resurged and ran the entire length of the system. Before leaving we located the entrance to La Cueva de la Virgin. Returning Monday we agreed it was a very good trip*

Place: Midnight Cave
People: Steve Fleming, Robert Hemperly, Jeri Jones, Sandi Luker, Stan Moerbe, Dale Pate, Keith Heuss
Report by: Sandi Luker

The group of seven SWTG cavers went to Midnight Cave over the weekend of September 8, to aid in the continuing cleanup project there. At the cave, we met several other Texas cavers, among them Logan McNatt, Peter Strickland, John Everidge and John Vinson. Under their direction, the SWT cavers dismantled platforms and foundations and transported lumber at the surface base camp. We also helped transport lumber through the cave to the skylight entrance. From there we aided in effort to haul the lumber up the drop to the surface. Sunday morning, Keith, Steve, Stan and Sandi spent about three hours photographing parts of the cave, before to cleanup work on the surface.

September 29-October 1, 1972
Place: Langtry Lead, Emerald Sink
People: Mary Kay Krauska, Sandi Luker, Stan Moerbe, Bill Wilson
Report by: Sandi Luker

The purpose of the trip was to allow new cavers to become more experienced with vertical work inside a cave. Saturday morning the group received permission to enter Emerald Sink and Langtry Lead Caves. The first cave entered was Emerald Sink. From the bottom of the 140' drop, the group went down the crawlway as far as the second drop of 48' before starting back. Before entering Langtry Lead Cave, the group went to look at Fisher's Fissure and Gardner's Fall Pit. At Langtry Lead, a pair of ring-tailed cats, just inside the entrance momentarily delayed the group. Once inside the cave, the group went past the Big Room to the crawlway leading to the Hall of Unicorns. The crawlway was tight and very rough in places. Before it became too small to negotiate due to washed in gravel and debris, the cavers were forced to turn back. Camp was then made at the Pecos River Roadside Park, where Mary Kay and Bill rappeled from the high water bridge.

Cottonwood Cave, N.M.

September 30-October 2, 1972
Place: San Pedro de Iturbide
People: 10 from SWTSG and 12 from AAC
Report by: Steve Fleming

Returning to Iturbide. for the second time, the two grottos combined to map the cave which Glenn Darilek, Mike Walsh, and I had found earlier. We also came to check the area for other caves. It also provided the opportunity for many people to visit a mexican cave. The cave turned out to be approximately 250 meters long with no promising leads. Several small and one large shelters were found in the area along with a 70 meter high waterfall. The scenic aspects were obscured by a heavy fog but several new cavers got hooked on Mexico. On the way back by way of Monterrey, several of us climbed up and did Cueva de La Boca.

October 6-8, 1972
Place: Fem, Deep, Punkin, and Blowhole Caves
People: Tom Allison, Herman Borchers, Brian Clark, Larry Doreck, Ellen Eurland, Steve Fleming, Blake Harrison, Robert Hemperly, Keith Heuss, Paul Isham, Jeri Jones, Mary Kay Krauska, Sandi Luker, Stan Moerbe, Dottie Morris, Hal Odem, Donald Spear, John Teates, Linda and Mike Walsh, Bill Wilson, Dale Pate
Report by: John Teates

Our first stop for the club trip was Fern Cave. After missing our turn once, we proceeded to backtrack and found the gate. Once in, the road was a bit more rough then one would expect. Upon arriving at the cave almost an hour and a half later, SWTG set up camp. By midnight Blake arrived followed by four cavers from Kingsland, and Ronnie Fiesler with some UTG cavers.

Entrance can be attained by either rappeling or using an old rickity ladder. Once inside the cave goes in two directions. One way is about 1500' long, many fern plants grow around the entrance. Walking passage is about 40' in diameter. Going the 1500' route, a large room is encountered first. This room has a large (30-40’) mound of bat guano and probably 50,000 or so bats. Getting past the ammonia smell and proceeding a little further on another room is entered. This room is about 100-120’ in diameter with a 40-50' ceiling. A skylight allows water to drain into the cave.

Arriving at Black Ranch we encountered some Alpine Cavers and some independent cavers. After a night of popcorn and campfire we broke up and did different caves. The majority did Deep and Blowhole. After spending all day doing both, the trip finally ended and headed home to San Marcos.

October 21-22, 1972
Place: La Gruta del Palmito, Mexico
People: Brian Clark, Ellen Eurland, Blake Harrison, Mary Kay Krauska, U.T. cavers
Report by: Mary Kay Krauska

At 5:30 Blake called me and said there was a trip to Mexico and did I want to go. Being new and ready to go anywhere *X* said yes and was packed thirty minutes later. Of course we didn’t leave till 8:00 PM though. On the way down we stopped in San Antonio so I could pick up my birth certificate and I was on my way to Mexico for my first time. Arrived at Ojo de Agua about 4:30 AM, took a quick dip and conked out for about four hours. After a few misunderstandings we started up to the cave about 12:00. We headed on through, went to the new passage and did our best (or rather, Blake’s best) to cover the passage back up when we came out. Ran into Neil and Barbara and went up to the Birthday Passage. There was a bit of difficulty getting the rope down, but we got it down okay. Neil then showed us around and also showed us how to get out. After getting out and down the trail, it was realized that there was only one small car

for seven grungy cavers and their equipment. The road was quite rocky so myself and another UeT. caver started jogging back towards Bustamante. We were later caught up by the car and rode on the front into Bustamante. After getting a refresca we crammed our bodies into the car back to camp at Ojo. Sometime later it hit us that maybe we were tired and hit the sack. Sunday we had to leave early because of other commitments (school exams), and arrived home in the late afternoon.

November 18-19, 1972
Places La Grata del Palmito, Mexico
Peoples Robert Hamperly, Keith. Heuss, Jeri Jones, Mary Kay Krauska, Dale Pate
Report by? Mary Kay Krauska

Xn preparation for the long hike to Golondrinas and just for the heck of it, we all took a trip to Bustamante about three days before our trip to Golondrinas during Thanksgiving. At the end of our hike up to the cave, we met some Mexican students from Monterrey and after being sociable we promptly tried to lose them. Keith busied himself taking pictures and although we tried our best, we couldn't get a rope rigged to go up to the Birthday Passage. Sunday we visited Grutas de Garcia,a commercial cave in Mexico. Its rather large, dead, and obnoxiously commercial, but the ride up to the cave (in a funicular) made it worth it. Visited Monterrey for a short while and came on home.

Sandi Luker at Big Bend

November 22-26, 1972
Place: Sotano de las Golondrinas
People: Brian Clark, Ellen Eurland, Steve Fleming, Blake Harrison, Robert Hemperly, Keith Heuss, Mary Kay Krauska, Sandi Luker, Stan Moerbe, Donald Spear, John Teates, Bill Wilson, John Graves, Scott Harden, Chuck Stuehm, Jim Young, Jack White, Miles Abernathy, Ann Lucas, Terry Raines, James Reddell
Report by: Stan Moerbe

Several Southwest Texas cavers started thinking (infrequent occurance) several months before the November Thanksgiving break and decided it was time to plan a trip to the most impressive Sotano de las Golondrinas* It wasn't long before word got around about these plans and the number of people going ballooned. By Wednesday, November 22, the day the expedition left San Marcos for Mexico, we had up to 16 people saying they were going down "Big Sixteen people on one rope! Gads! At 30 minutes going down and 90 minutes coming up per person, we were really going to have to move.

1200' of Bluewater II had been ordered by Blake and was later to be divided among those who had been so kind as to buy it together. John Graves had purchased 600' our club had put up money for 300' and somebody, somewhere bought the rest. When the rope arrived, it was 1296' long.

On Wednesday, Blake's and Keith's VW vans left San Marcos at 3:30 PM (2 hours late), with 13 people and some individuals predicting our arrival in Aquismon. in 12-14 hours. We reached Reynosa by 10:30 PM and had little trouble getting across, which was surprising considering that all 13 of us walked in at one time. An American who spoke fluent Spanish helped us in convincing the Mexican official to grant us all visas .

We were heading south again by 12:30 AM and things went relatively smooth for about an hour and then Keith's van lost a headlight to a rock. Several hours later we stopped to confer between vans and Chuck Stuehm, John Teates, and Scott Harden drove up in Chuck's station wagon. They had left San Antonio two hours later than we left San Marcos and he had already caught us.

The caravan was up to three vehicles and we started off again (Keith's van had two eyes again). Aquismon was finally reached at about noon, with more delays of course. This time it was a truck/bus collision south of Valles. They never did move anything and after about 30 minutes we were able to detour around it. Shortly after we arrived in Aquismon, Terry Raines and company showed up and decided to accompany us up the hill. The entire trip from San Marcos to Aquismon was made with windshield wipers on. It never really rained, but misted continuously, and this type of weather plagued us throughout the entire trip.

The necessary permission was obtained in Aquismon to enter the pit, but we were unable to get burros to carry the rope. We were told that all of the burros and their owners were in' Tamapatz for the market day. Because of this we had to employ the assistance of Pepe, an English speaking local, to locate two human rope bearers. Here and at other times the Spanish of Sandi and Scott came in very handy. By the time

we had two men to handle the rope, the prices had skyrocketed from Pepe's original estimate of 15 pesos a day per man to 30 pesos, and then to 40 pesos per man, (and clever Richard thinks he's got problems with inflation)

With this problem solved (or so we thought) everyone grabbed their packs and we set off in the mist for Golondrinas. Before long everyone had mud up to their knees, some had it on their rear ends and one female was even reported to have gotten mud on her forehead. As you may have guessed, the trail was super-slick and staying on one's feet became extremely difficult. Even with this problem everyone had completed the hike within 6 1/2 hours. At camp everyone hurried to assemble some sort of tent or lean-to to get out of the weather. Everyone Crashed!

By 8 AM people were up and about and soon Blake and a few hardier souls were rigging the pit. By 10 Scott was on the 1200' section of rope and Robert and I were tying the last of the four 300' ropes together to form a second descendable rope. When Scott reached bottom everyone was awed as Blake unrolled and threw his sleeping bag into the pit. Fantastic. During this time, Terry was measuring our drop with an amazing device given to him by the Frenchmen at Midnight Cave. It consisted of a spool of cotton thread and an odometer somehow attached to one another inside a magic box. After getting a reading of 1079', he and his group left to look at a small cave.

Steve Fleming went down on the new rope second and was followed by Robert Hemperly and John Graves. While John was descending on the 1200, Blake rigged up and rappelled on the knotted line. Sandi and I then rappelled in tandem with Sandi giving much needed help as I passed over the last knot. Brian then came down on the 1200 and untied the last 600' of the knotted line. This was to be used in descending the Abertura. With Brian on bottom the two 300's were coiled and four of us decided to go to the bottom of the Abertura. These were Blake, Brian, Robert, and myself. When we left, Jack, Jim, and Donald were still waiting to descend.The opening was easily located from directions by Neal and Craig

and it only took about 4 1/2 hours for the group to reach bottom and climb back out. On reaching the -1689' level, initials were found in the mud that had been there for over 2 years. Neither the descent nor the climb out was very eventful. There were a few minor incidents though? I lost my watch crystal at the lowest point and Blake found it later? stuck in the wall; Robert climbed two 150' drops without light (some of it was really bad even with light); I dropped a Gibbs 150' but fin- ally recovered it.

While these four were in the crevice, Jack, Jim, and Donald came down. jack, aided or bothered by Sandi (?), succeeded in collecting specimens; he was the only one with a true reason for coming (other than recreation)• As soon as everyone had reached the bottom, those down first began ascending.

When "Blake's Brave Bunch" returned from below, it was approximately 9PM, and several persons were already out of the pit. These included Steve Fleming, John Graves, Scott Harden, and Jack White. Sandi then rigged and climbed up to the end of the 600' of other rope which was still hanging over the edge rigged. She switched ropes so that I could begin climbing sooner on the main line. Robert and Brian then followed on the main line and it was 4:30AM before they were out.

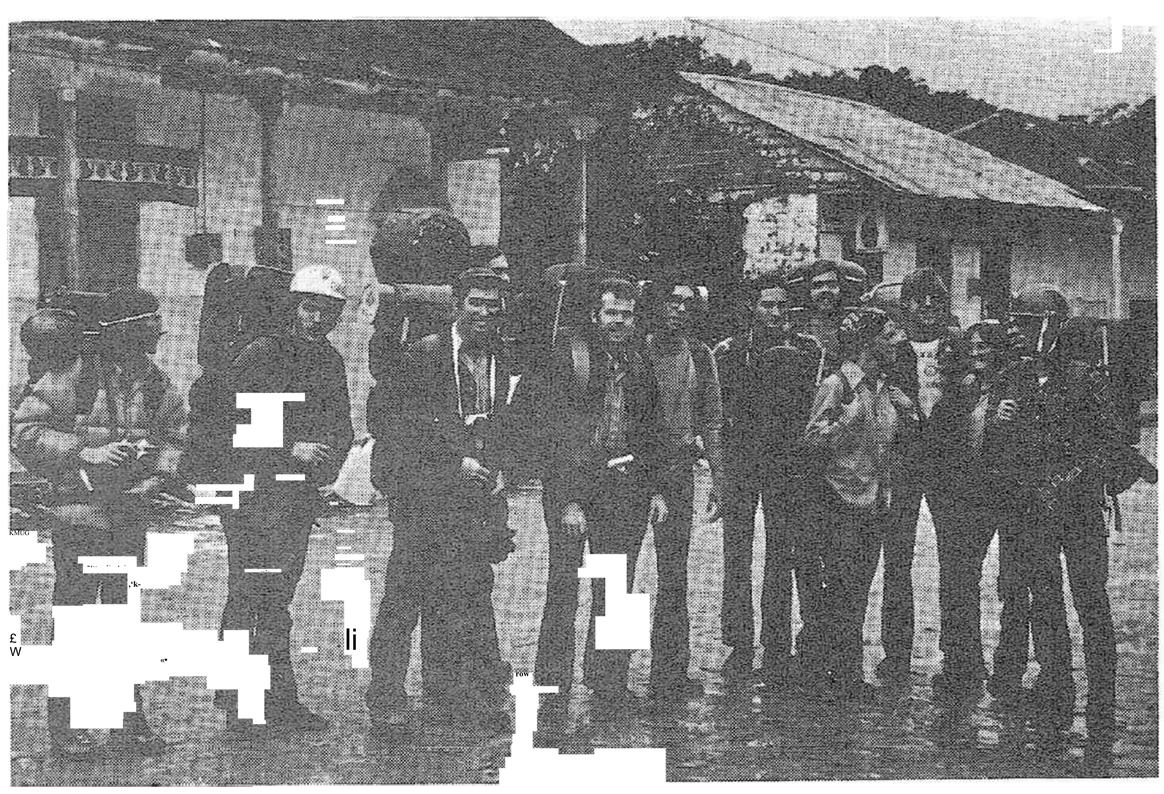
Blake, Jim, and Donald waited till the next morning and slept in the pit overnight. They started up at about 7:30 and Blake, the last one out, was up at about 11:30. During this time several people had packed up and headed back for Aquismon. Terry and his group had also departed. This left Mary Kay, Robert, Ellen, Brian, Sandi, myself, Blake, Jim, Donald, and the rope bearers to haul up the rope. This was grudgingly completed by 12:30 that afternoon.

The weather had cleared up and had been beautiful on Friday when the pit was entered, but by Saturday the mist and light rain had returned. The trip back from Golondrinas was treacherous due to the mud. By 4:30 everyone had reached La Laja and had a few cokes. Everyone set off again with Sandi and I bringing up the rear. About 30 minutes out of La Laja, on a series of steep and slick switchbacks, Sandi lost her footing and fell. Falling was a common occurance experienced by everyone on the trip in? but Sandi fell backward and to the side and tried to break her fall with her right arm. Well? the fall wasn't the only thing that broke. When Sandi hit the ground she let out a rather terrifying scream and didn't get back up. Upon investigation? I confirmed her fears—a fractured wrist. A splint was applied and by tying Sandies pack to mine we make pretty good time on the rest of the hike arriving in Aquismon only 30 minutes behind the rest.

Because of Sandi's condition it was decided that Keith's van would head for the border(after a quick meal in Valles), and take Sandi to the Naval Air Station in Kingsville for repairs. Blake and company went to the Los Sabinos campground and met cavers from UT and A&I.

The trip to Kingsville went fast without a search at the border. Diagnosis on Sandi's arm was that it was a clean break of the radius with no displacement. A cast was applied and we headed for San Marcos and arrived by 5:00PM Sunday. Blake's van also arrived later that evening.

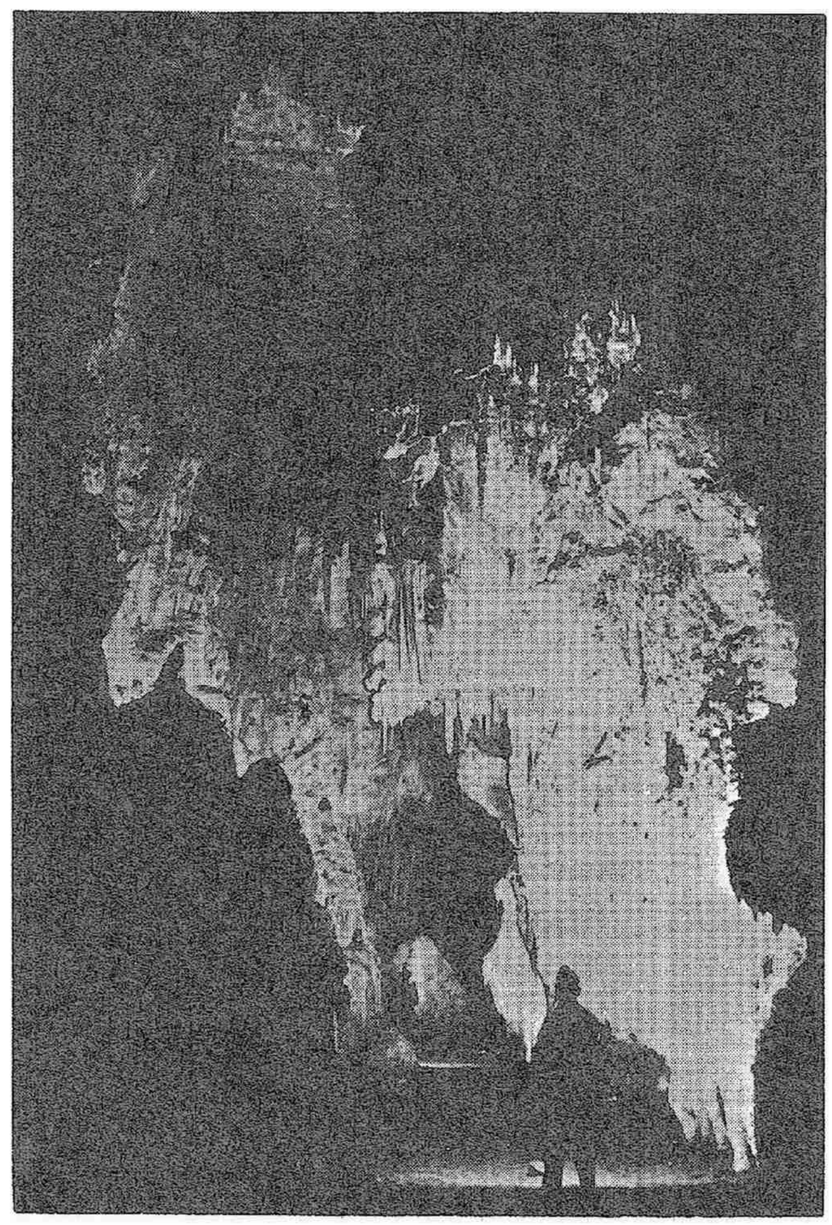
The trip was declared a success by everyone except Mike Walsh (where did he come in?) who, as expected, bitched about the total lack of any mapping. We had succeeded in blowing the entire Thanksgiving break for the second year in a row without doing any mapping. Knowing this club, there is a good chance to make it three in a row next year.



Aquismon, Thanksgiving '72

December 16-17? 1972
Place: La Poza? Cueva de los Vampiros
People: Steve Fleming, John Graves? Robert Hemperly, Blake Harrison?
Mary Kay Krauska? Wayne Russell? Mike Walsh
Report by: Mary Kay Krauska

Before arriving at La Poza? we went looking at all the gypsum sinks near by. The sink, named after the village it is in the middle of, is just a huge sunken area with a stream running through it. We mapped it and went looking for a cave that a missionary had told us about. After I had managed to lose myself about a mile from everyone else? looking for the cave? Robert came running after me? telling me it had been found shortly after I had left. So much for my hunting abilities. We checked the area for a short while longer but found nothing of much significance. That evening we arrived a vampire bat cave Wayne Russell had discovered before. It was named Cueva de los Vampiros. It had a lot of mazework and as Wayne and Steve and Mike explored all the passage ways? the rest of us started mapping it. The bats were rather rambunctuous and parts of the cave were quite muddy and wet? so we tried to finish our mapping as quick as possible. It ended up taking most of the evening to do this? but after we got out we headed toward Huasteca Canyon? where we spent the night. Sunday we went turista in Monterrey since it was near Christmas. Arrived home quite late as we ran out of gas in the middle of the night in the middle of nowhere .



Hidden Cave, N. M$_o$

December 27, 1972-January 9, 1973

Place: Valles and Ahuacatlan

People: Blake Harrison, Robert Hemperly, Mary Kay Krauska, Donald Spear

Report by: Robert Hemperly and Mary Kay Krauska

After a few hectic days rummaging around for a ride, I finally contacted Ronnie Fiesler. His truck was only half full as he only had eight people and he said he wouldn't want to leave anyone "stranded" in the states durifig Christmas holidays. For unexplainable reasons, they let us through with no hassles nine people, one trucks Valles, stamp, scribble, next. Amazing. Our first stop was Ocampo, where I went along with a mapping team in the newly discovered 360' pit, Sotano de Vasquez. It was a very old cave. The AMCS team decided to stay and finish the mapping, while Ronnie drove south to Quintero. The cave there was very hot, muddy and icky. At Los Sabinos I had the opportunity to visit Matapalma, which Neal and Logan feel needs remapping. We got back to camp at 3 AM. At nine o'clock the next day, we took off for Arroyo. one AMCS mapping team and one tour given by Frank Binney. We got back to camp fourteen hours later. Needing some rest, we went to the Rio Choy. The next day a few friends of mine came in from Houston; Don Tebbet and Robert Shalek. We all went with Don Broussard and Bill Boxtigler (sp?) to Sotano del Soyate. The next day Blake, Donald and Mary Kay drove in and we left for parts unknown.

After picking up Robert in Los Sabinos, we headed for Ahuacatlan. We hiked up through the hills to Sotanito de Ahuacatlan and rappelled in to throw rocks down the pit. Found a rude note from some eastern cavers about the difficulties of toe pit, and also uncovered carbide, neither of which impressed us much. The next day we went hunting for pits. The Montoyas, a Mexican family, known for being quite friendly to cavers, fed us, gave us water, and Mr. Montoya lead us to a pit called Sotano de Cuate. Robert rappelled in (about 250'), found ants and immediately came out. We then hiked over to Macho Rey, Which is really Sotano de Escondido. Besides a few fireworks and a dropped jumar, everything went smoothly. Headed back down the next day and back to Valles to find ourselves deserted. Did Arroyo (it was partially flooded) and shopped a bit in Valles. Came back to the states with a shattered window and a back end full of chairs and a rocker we had bought in Mante .

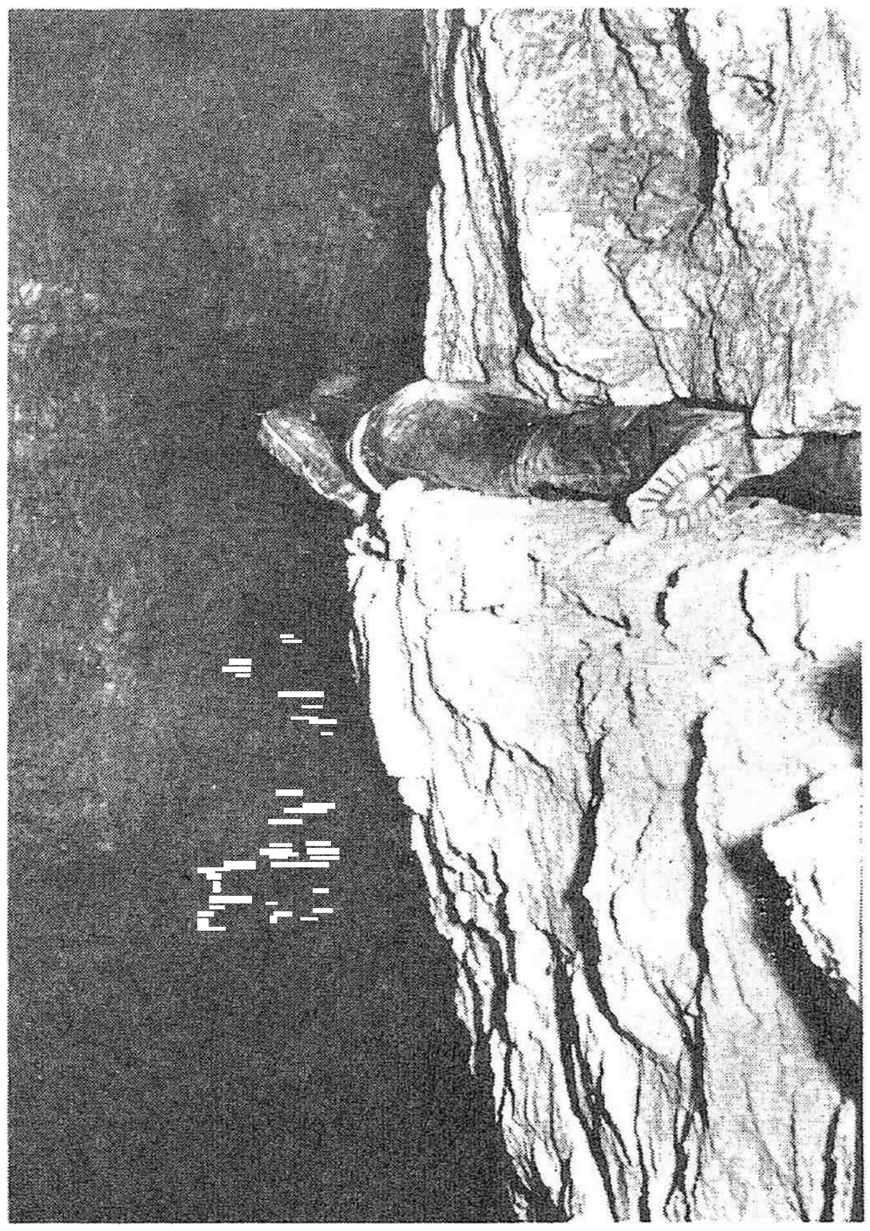
THE QUITTER

When you're lost in the wild and you're scared as a child,
And death looks you bang in the eye-
And you're sore as a boil, it's according to Hoyle,
To cock your revolver and.....die.
But the Code of a Man says fight all you can,
And self-dissolution is barred.
In hunger and woe, Oh it's easy to blow,
It's the he11-served-for-breakfast that's hard.

"You're sick of the game!", well, now that's a shame!
You're young and you're brave and you're bright.
"You've had a raw deal!", I know, but don't squeal,
Buck up, do your damnedest and fight.
It's the plugging away that will win you the day,
So don't be a piker; old pard!
Just draw on your grit, it's dead easy to quit,
It's the keeping your chin up that's hard.

It's easy to cry that you're beaten and die,
It's easy to crawfish and crawl,
But to fight and to fight when hope's out of sight,
Why that's the best game of them all!
And though you come out of each grueling bout,
All broken and beaten and scarred,
Just have one more try, it's so easy to die,
It's the keeping on living that's hard.

Robert Service



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